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PULAR ILLUSTRATED REPORT
E BRITISH AND FOREIGN
E SOCIETY 1911-1912

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MORE GOLDEN THAN GOLD

Photo by *H. C. White.*

THE GOLDEN TEMPLE AT AMRITSAR, IN THE PANJAB.

MORE GOLDEN THAN GOLD

THE BIBLE HOUSE, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, LONDON
1912

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Except where otherwise stated, the incidents and statistics in this Popular Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society belong to last year's record. It should be noted that this period is reckoned to end on December 31st, 1911, as regards the Bible Society's foreign work; and as regards its home work, on March 31st, 1912.

T. H. DARLOW,
Literary Superintendent.

THE BIBLE HOUSE,
August, 1912.

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Gold! Gold! Gold! Gold!
Bright and yellow, hard and cold,
Molten, graven, hammer'd, and roll'd;
Heavy to get and light to hold;
Hoarded, barter'd, bought, and sold,
Stolen, borrow'd, squander'd, doled:
Spurn'd by the young, but hugg'd by the old
To the very verge of the churchyard mould;
Price of many a crime untold;
Gold! Gold! Gold! Gold:
Good or bad a thousand-fold!
How widely its agencies vary—
To save—to ruin—to curse—to bless—
As even its minted coins express,
Now stamped with the image of Good Queen Bess,
And now of a Bloody Mary!

HOOD.

MORE GOLDEN THAN GOLD

PROLOGUE

ON PRECIOUS METAL

"*Oft have I travelled in the realms of gold.*"—KEATS.

AMONG the many stages in human development few can have been of greater moment for man's advance than his discovery of metals and of the means of working them. When we gaze back into the grey morning of the world before history began, we distinguish roughly three periods—the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, and the Iron Age. And those names point to the vast importance of the progressive steps from the flint knife to the bronze celt, and thence to the keen-edged iron sword and ploughshare. Iron must have been the most precious of metals to the primeval folk who first found how to smelt it and forge it; and so Tubal-cain, the earliest smith, became the father of smiths innumerable.

Gold, however, was not only too scarce for common use, but too soft to be fashioned into serviceable

tools or weapons. Yet among all metals gold is distinguished by rare qualities which it possesses to a supreme degree. For the permanence of its colour and lustre it stands alone. And by virtue of its unique power to resist oxidation, gold is almost indestructible, and bids defiance to the corrosion of time. The British Museum has just acquired a hoard of gold coins, unearthed not far from Hadrian's Wall in Northumberland. These glittering pieces, which date from Nero to Marcus Aurelius, were buried about 150 A.D., and to-day are almost as bright and sharp and clear as ever, after the drums and the tramplings of so many conquests and centuries. For its intrinsic qualities gold was prized from the earliest ages, and moreover was adopted as a favourite material for primitive art. Its extraordinary malleability and pliancy, its power of being drawn out into wire or flattened into leaf of almost incredible fineness, led to its being employed for work which required great minuteness and delicacy of execution: while its beauty and rarity restricted its use, as a rule, to objects of adornment and luxury.

Golden ornaments were far more ancient even than golden coins, and they come to light among the relics and ruins of archaic civilizations. We dig them out of the prehistoric palace of Minos in Crete and the treasury of Atreus at Mycenæ. We discover them under the mounds which mark the place that once was Babylon and the place that once was Troy. The buried cities of Etruria have yielded gold bracelets and necklets which modern craftsmen copy but hardly surpass. In the tombs of Egypt elaborate gold-work has survived from far

Photo by *The Photochrom Co.*

THE COLONNADE OF THE GREAT TEMPLE AT KARNAK,
IN UPPER EGYPT.

remote ages. Specimens of leaf-gilding are found on mummy cases. Professor Flinders Petrie describes the exquisite delicacy and finish of the Egyptian jewellery found at Dahshur, dating from about 2500 B.C., which shows that nothing has since been gained in technical ability. "The special feature of this jewellery is the *cloisonné* work of hundreds of minute pieces of coloured stones, each cut to a precise shape and each inserted in a perfectly fitting socket, made by invisible delicate soldering of thin strips of gold."

This precious metal was naturally consecrated to sacred uses. The Incas of Peru fastened gold plates on the walls of their temples. The same splendid and costly material had been used, many centuries earlier, to adorn the fabric and furniture of the Hebrew tabernacle and the vestments of the high priest. In medieval times the Golden Rose was an ornament made of wrought gold and set with gems, generally sapphires, which was blessed by the Pope on the fourth Sunday in Lent, and usually sent afterwards as a mark of special favour to some distinguished individual or church or community. At first this consisted of a single blossom fashioned in wrought gold and coloured red; but the form finally adopted was a thorny branch with leaves and flowers, the petals of which were decked with gems, surmounted by one principal rose.

As one metal came to be esteemed above all others the gold-bearing regions of the world were eagerly coveted and fiercely fought for. The land of Havilah and the land of Ophir, we may be sure, formed ground of savage contention among primitive kings. Early explorers of Africa were lured by stories of the

golden sand of its sunny fountains. The Gold Coast took its name from the metal which was found there, and our English guineas remind us of the place whence English sailors fetched the bullion out of which they were coined. Gold was the motive which lay behind the Spanish conquests in the New World, and then sent English captains buccaneering along the Spanish Main. Long after Cortes had subdued Mexico and Pizarro had sacked the treasures of Peru, men went on for generations believing in the fabled country of Eldorado and the golden city of Manoa, "which is in breadth a three days' journey" —where the last Inca Prince had fled with untold wealth, and taken refuge in "that tract which lieth between the great rivers of Amazons and the Banaguan, otherwise called Maranon and Orinoque." This glittering phantom lured multitudes of adventurers to cross the ocean and plunge into the green gulfs of primeval forest, never to emerge again. It was the selfsame region—be it noted—which has just witnessed such devilish cruelties committed by modern traders in their lust for gain. Men still living can recollect the discovery of dazzling auriferous deposits, first in California and then in Australia, followed by a wild rush of emigrants to exploit those new fields. Less than thirty years ago in the Transvaal gold-reefs of enormous value came to light, which have incidentally altered the map of South Africa.

Throughout the primitive legends and traditions of mankind gold appears as a synonym for what is most precious. In the garden of the Hesperides a sleepless dragon guarded the golden apples. Jason and his Argonauts sailed in quest of the golden fleece. And

later and sadder generations looked back wistfully at the world's childhood and dreamed of a golden age. So in ancient literature gold is the universal symbol of the highest purity and value. Concerning that heavenly Jerusalem which the seer beheld in his vision, we read that the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. The tormented patriarch confessed: "When I am tried I shall come forth as gold." And thus we have our justification in the Scriptures themselves when we apply to them the words: "More to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold."

THE STANDARD OF VALUE

> "*The absolute perfection of Scripture is seen by relation unto that end whereunto it tendeth. . . . Whatsoever to make up the doctrine of man's salvation is added, as in supply of the Scripture's insufficiency, we reject it. Scripture, purposing this, had perfectly and fully done it. . . . We count those things perfect which want nothing requisite for the end whereunto they were instituted . . . so the Scripture, yea, every sentence thereof, is perfect, and wanteth nothing unto that purpose for which God delivered the same.*"—HOOKER: *Ecclesiastical Polity*, II. viii. 5.

THE primitive form of exchange was by means of barter, which goes on still among savages and schoolboys. In ancient Italy it appears that oxen and sheep served as units of value, ten sheep being reckoned equal to one ox. Some of the early English colonists in North America adopted tobacco as legal tender, and salt was formerly used for the same purpose in Abyssinia and in Mexico. Articles of ornament still play the part of money among some uncivilized tribes—for example, haiqua shells are current among the redskins in British Columbia, as are cowrie shells in various parts of India, while whales' teeth or scarlet feathers take the place of coin on certain islands in the South Seas.

When we speak of "money," however, we mean

stamped bits of metal, which are recognized as a medium of exchange. The selection of metal for this purpose began far back in the history of civilization. According to Aristotle, there was a time when iron was a common material for currency, and the ancient iron money of Sparta was probably the survival of a use which had died out in other Greek cities and states. Iron spikes at one time did duty for money in parts of Central Africa, and Adam Smith notes that nails were employed for the same purpose in Scotland. Even lead has sometimes served as money—for instance, in Burma. Copper coins were used in China, side by side with iron, and they figure among the most ancient Hebrew money. Copper formed the sole coinage at Rome down to 269 B.C., when silver was introduced. Silver, indeed, was the principal Greek material for money, and it remained the leading constituent in the currencies of medieval Europe. Down to the close of the fourteenth century money, as a rule, was coined in silver, and almost until the present time Eastern peoples preferred silver to gold.

Qualities of a Standard.

In our days, however, the place held by gold as the world's standard of value is beyond dispute. We can hardly say, indeed, at what date this metal first came to be used in exchange. There are pictures of ancient Egyptians weighing in scales great heaps of gold and silver rings. And gold has certain outstanding qualities which make it supremely suitable for the purposes of coinage. To serve as money a metal must be limited in

supply and of high price in proportion to its weight or mass. It must be durable, easily transferable, and readily distinguished. And finally, its own intrinsic value must alter as little as possible. From the nature of things we can never secure absolute fixity of value in any material object; but it is sufficient for the purpose that our standard shall not change during short periods. Now this is characteristic of the more precious metals, and especially of gold—in contrast with such a commodity as corn, which varies in price considerably from year to year.

As satisfying all these requirements no metal can compare with gold, which is of small volume, and of even quality, and easy of transport, and readily guarded, and steady in value, and divisible without loss—besides being beautiful, brilliant, and durable, almost to eternity. This is why all civilized nations have adopted it as the standard by which they measure the value of every other kind of merchandise. We habitually think and speak of wealth in terms of gold.

Naturally, the name of this standard metal comes to be used as a symbol or metaphor to stand for whatever we prize as most precious of its kind. One example, among many, will serve to illustrate the point. The famous old *Legenda Aurea*, or Golden Legend, originally written in Latin, in the thirteenth century, by Jacobus de Voragine, formed a great text-book and store-house of the lore of the Middle Ages. Its compiler called his work simply "Legends of the Saints"; but the epithet "Golden" was bestowed on it by its admirers, because, as Wynkyn de Worde says, "Like as passeth gold in

value all other metals, so this Legend exceedeth all other books."

The Standard of Scripture.

Moreover, there is a special sense in which the Bible deserves to be called more golden than gold, because it remains the supreme standard for the Christian Church, by comparison with which we measure and test all spiritual values. "The Bible," said Newman, "is the record of the whole revealed faith; so far all parties agree." It is the one book which preserves for us all that we certainly know about the life and words and character of Christ Himself. The teaching of the great Reformers on this matter has been summed up by a profound modern scholar, whose verdict we may venture to quote: "If I am asked why I receive Scripture as the Word of God and as the only perfect rule of faith and life, I answer with all the fathers of the Protestant Church, *Because the Bible is the only record of the redeeming love of God, because in the Bible alone I find God drawing near to man in Christ Jesus, and declaring to us in Him His will for our salvation. And this record I know to be true by the witness of His Spirit in my heart, whereby I am assured that none other than God Himself is able to speak such words to my soul.*"

The theology of Reformed Christendom in the last resort bases the authority of Scripture upon the *testimonium Sancti Spiritus.* What does that mean? It can only mean that "Scripture is the medium through which we come face to face with the Divine revelation in Christ, and being thus brought under the living influence of the Person are

by the Holy Spirit enabled rightly to apprehend Him as so presented to us, and so, of course, to recognize the medium whereby alone we can approach the historic Christ as really divine." This Book remains solitary and incomparable and unshaken because its Gospel is guaranteed by testimony which is more than human. The Holy Ghost brings home its revelation of God's judgment and mercy irresistibly to penitent souls, and authenticates the message as divinely and infallibly true. Herein consists the enduring, commanding authority of the Bible.

The Peril of Tradition.

This supreme spiritual authority of the Bible in all things which concern our salvation may be attacked or undermined from two opposite directions. There are those, for instance, who, instead of recognizing the Church as the witness and keeper of Holy Writ, set up ecclesiastical authority to override Scripture. Cardinal Bellarmine once described the Bible as "the paper Pope of the Protestants." But it is simple matter of history that as soon as the primitive Church had a New Testament to set alongside of the Old, the two together became the authoritative standard of Christian teaching, and the only such standard. As a living English writer* puts it:—

"For the common routine, Church custom or tradition might be sufficient, but such tradition was subject to the commands of the Lord, and had to be defended by them if disputed, checked by them if doubtful: and when once the elders had passed away, the commands of the Lord could only be known

* Gwatkin: *Early Church History*, i. 282.

from the written word. If Scripture and tradition were not formally arrayed against each other, as in the age of the Reformation, the reason is that nobody yet supposed tradition to be independent of Scripture in the sense of being entitled to revise, or upon occasion to reverse, the commands of Christ."

The Churches of the Reformation are of one mind as to the supremacy of Scripture. For them God's Book, taken in its full content and meaning, is the final test of necessary Christian truth. All history bears witness that tradition left to itself is precarious, because tradition naturally tends to become perverted and corrupt. But in the writings of apostles and evangelists we possess embodied our standard of faith and practice. The New Testament remains as a touchstone—a court of reference to which we can constantly appeal on questions both of doctrine and life. And thus it is familiarity on the part of all members of the Church with the Scriptures which must keep the conscience and faith of Christians pure.

In our personal religious life this use of the Bible has peculiar value amid the flux of opinions and the changing fashions of philosophy and theology. It saves us alike from defects and excesses in belief, and from aberrations in devotion. The Christian who honestly schools himself by Holy Scripture will not grow warped or one-sided or fanatical. When even spiritual experience grows perplexed and bewildered and our highest instincts and emotions seem to contradict each other, we fall back simply and thankfully on this unfailing director and guide of the soul, which never deceives and never leads astray.

The Crucible of Criticism.

On the other hand there are those who hold that the value of the Bible as a standard has been dissolved away and destroyed by the methods of modern criticism. To maintain this, however, betrays a false idea of what spiritual authority involves, and also an imperfect knowledge of what Biblical scholarship has accomplished. The steady tendency of the most recent investigations and discoveries is to assign earlier and still earlier dates to the Gospels. In point of fact the Scriptures as a whole have gained immensely from the results of critical and historical research; they appear to-day far more a living record of God's revelation to mankind than they appeared a century or half a century ago. Moreover, when criticism has exhausted itself, the Bible remains intact in regard to that which makes it to be the Bible. Most of the problems over which scholars dispute have little practical bearing upon the spiritual content and authority of the New Testament. Plain men still meet God in these pages as they meet Him nowhere else. So keen a critic as Professor Harnack has said, "Let the simple Christian continue to read his Bible as he did before, for the meaning which he has been drawing from it is the true meaning, and the best critic can find no other." The gold emerges from the fiery ordeal more golden than ever.

> "*He who has believed the Divine Scriptures, with firm judgment, receives in the voice of God who gave the Scriptures a proof that cannot be spoken against.*"
>
> CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA: *Strom.* II. ix. 6.

FROM MANY MINTS

" The Scripture and Worde of God is truly to every Christen man of lyke worthynesse and authoritie, in what language so ever the Holy Ghost speaketh it."
MILES COVERDALE.

FOR practical purposes gold is the accepted standard of value among civilized nations. But each government coins money for itself at its official mints, and issues gold stamped with its own characteristic devices and emblems. Now a modern realm will include folk who speak various languages and dialects, and yet use the same coinage. For instance, a Russian rouble circulates from hand to hand through all the hundred and twenty kindreds and tribes which live under the sceptre of the White Tsar. The same rupee is current from end to end of the Indian Empire, among men who use a hundred and forty different forms of speech. It appears, therefore, that the gold of the Gospel must be minted into a multitude of versions, before it can win its way throughout the world. And just as the same precious metal is coined in many shapes and fashions, so the selfsame Gospel learns to speak in all the tongues of mankind. It gains currency among barbarous races at the ends of the earth, when once it is put into a shape which they can recognize and understand.

We know that the inscription over the Cross was written "Hebrew-wise, Roman-wise, Hellenic-wise" —in the national, the official, and the general language. And all our evidence goes to show that the duty of translating the Bible was instinctively recognized even in the primitive Church. Only last April the trustees of the British Museum published a newly discovered papyrus manuscript of singular interest and value, which contains the books of Deuteronomy, Jonah, and the Acts, rendered into the Coptic dialect of Upper Egypt. This new codex proves that copies of a Coptic version of parts of the Old and New Testaments were in use among Egyptian Christians in the early portion of the fourth century, and thus the origin of the version itself cannot be placed later than the third century. There is, therefore, every reason for believing that when St. Antony heard the Gospel read in his village church, the words which went home to the young man's heart and changed his whole life were read in his native tongue.

The trials of Translators.

Much might be written about the inherent difficulties of accurate and idiomatic translation. A few concrete modern examples will illustrate these difficulties more vividly than any general statement, and will also give some inkling of how they can be overcome.

Mr. Daniel Crawford, who has spent twenty-three years in a corner of Belgian Congo and has translated the New Testament into Luba, tells us of verbs with twenty-three tenses and nouns with nineteen genders, and declares that a translator must learn

Photo kindly lent *by Mr. Sidney H Ray*

ONE OF THE CHARACTERISTIC LONG HOUSES ON KIWAI ISLAND, FLY RIVER, NEW GUINEA.

to "think black" before he can master and reproduce Bantu idioms. Mr. W. H. Westcott, who has helped to render the New Testament into Luna-Inkongo, for a branch of the Bakuba tribe, also in Belgian Congo, bears testimony that "as the natives came to share the Christian experience, they began to show us an unsuspected richness in their tongue for the expression of Christian ideas."

The Rev. C. D. Helm, of the L.M.S. mission at Bulawayo, Rhodesia, who has just completed his task as chief reviser of the Tabele New Testament, describes how poverty-stricken that language was in its spiritual vocabulary. For instance, it had no equivalent for "holy," no term to express moral purity. After long consideration the missionaries chose a word used in speaking of "meal very finely ground," which had extended meanings akin to the Scriptural idea of holiness. Experience proves that "words selected for lofty spiritual ideas are accepted, used, and understood as soon as the Matabele people learn to appreciate the ideas which they denote."

In his recent book *Among the Eskimos of Labrador*, Dr. C. K. Hutton describes some peculiarities of this form of the Eskimo language, in which our Society has published the complete Bible. When the missionaries first came to that lonely land of the great ice-barrier they found no word for forgiveness in the whole language. They set about making one, and evolved the splendid picture-word *Issumagijaujungnainermik*, based on the verb *issuma-vok* (he thinks). And so the picture of forgiveness to an Eskimo mind is "not being able to think about it any more." Reckoning is so foreign to the Eskimo nature that even the numerals have had to

be imported; there are no numbers in the Eskimo language beyond twenty, and the word for twenty is "a whole man—ten fingers and ten toes." Dr. Hutton continues :—

"I wondered, when I first went to Labrador, how some of those Bible pictures so familiar to us could appeal to a people living in so desolate a land. There are no sheep in Labrador, no cows, no milk and honey—excepting the kind in tins; no fruit-trees better than the dwarfed brushwood that crawls upon the ground. But the Eskimo is a man who is not much troubled by doubts; he takes his Bible literally, drinking in its teaching with a child's simplicity; and, by the use of pictures and careful explanations, the Bible stories have become as real and helpful to the Eskimos as they are to us."

New Bottles for New Wine.

From the standpoint of Bible translation it is most significant to hear of the new phrases which have been coined in China during the last few years to meet the needs of the new style of thought. These expressions have gained currency mainly through Chinese newspapers, and were unknown to sinologues whose vocabularies were acquired in ante-Boxer days. There is one new word that everybody glibly recites; it is the word for an ideal, and means literally, "the thing you have your eye on." A fit companion to this is the new way of speaking of a man's purpose in life: "his magnetic needle points in such and such a direction." A whole group of new expressions for such conceptions as society, reform, the public good, constitutional government, protection of life, taking the initiative, removing obstructions, to volunteer one's services, all indicate the direction in which the winds of thought are blowing in China. The newspapers now have a word meaning "rotten," which

they apply freely to the mandarins and the army. "Freedom of religion" is another new phrase in Chinese; so is a term meaning "to educate," as distinguished from "to instruct."

Last year the Christian Church in Korea, which is making such wonderful advance, received from our Society the first edition of the complete Korean Bible. The chief translator of this version tells us that the verb in Korean has "one thousand possible variations," and "is inflected to express personal experience, hearsay, probability, doubt, desire, intention, causation, concession, condition, interrogation, exclamation, indirect discourse," and other shades of meaning. Moreover, Korean words conveying pagan ideas had to be converted and baptized into a Christian sense; for example, "sin" was not sin till found out, the Korean word really meaning "crime"; "God" was confounded with the blue sky; "love" meant the feeling of a superior for an inferior, so that though God might "love" us, we could not be said to "love" God.

Marvellous is the transformation which takes place in a pagan tongue when it is converted to express the heavenly truths and ideals of the New Testament.

> "For all, love greatens and glorifies
> Till God's a-glow to the loving eyes,
> In what was mere earth before."

The lowest, the most sordid, the most paltry languages can be deepened and purified to Christian uses on Christian lips. Words once degenerate and defiled can be redeemed to transcendent meaning,

> "Steeped through with tears of triumph and remorse,
> Sweet with all sainthood, cleansed in martyr fires."

MORE GOLDEN THAN GOLD

Though they have lien among the pots, yet they become as the dove which is covered with silver wings and her feathers like yellow gold.

The Triumphs of Translation.

One cardinal service of the Bible Society is to promote the translation and publication of the Scriptures in the languages of the world. The Society's historical list of versions now includes the names of FOUR HUNDRED AND FORTY distinct forms of speech. This means the complete Bible in 107 different languages; the New Testament in 105 more languages; and at least one book of Scripture in 228 other languages. Eighty-six new versions have been added to the Society's list since this present century began.

Eight New Languages.

During the past year the Society has published versions of the Gospel in eight new languages. The names of these are Dabida, Beta, Kiwai, Limba, Lakher, Chinook Jargon, Eastern Romany, and South German Romany.

The four Gospels have been published in Dabida, a dialect of the language current in the Taita region of British East Africa. This version is due to the C.M.S. missionaries, and is printed for their use.

The Gospels and the Acts are being printed in Beta, the speech of a tribe of Land Dyaks, for the use of the S.P.G. mission in Borneo

St. Mark's Gospel has been issued in Kiwai, which is spoken on the banks of the Fly River, for the L.M.S. mission in New Guinea.

St. Luke's Gospel has appeared in Limba, a

A GROUP OF GIPSIES IN EASTERN EUROPE

language current among the negroes in the backwoods of Sierra Leone, where it will be used mainly by the American Methodist Episcopal missionaries.

St. John's Gospel is being printed in Lakher, the language of a border tribe living in the Lushai Hills, between Burma and Assam.

St. Mark's Gospel is being printed in Chinook Jargon. This *patois* may be briefly described as a trade-language, which forms the common speech among Indian tribes scattered along the north-west coast of America, on the brink of the evening, from Oregon to Alaska.

Gipsies are far more numerous in Eastern Europe than in our own country. Thus there are 95,000 Romany in Bulgaria, and nearly 50,000 more in Servia and its borderland. Hordes of gipsies are scattered over Rumania, where most of them have settled down in Rumanian villages. Gipsies also abound in European Turkey and in Russia.

By a happy coincidence, in the year which saw the publication of *The Letters of George Borrow to the Bible Society*, Gospels have appeared for the first time in two fresh gipsy dialects. In Eastern Romany, current among gipsies in Bulgaria, St. Luke has been translated by Mr. Bernard Gilliat Smith, British vice-consul at Varna; in South German Romany, St. Mark has been translated by Engelbert Wittich, who is himself a Romany, with the assistance of linguists interested in this form of speech.

Revision and Correction.

Nevertheless these pioneer translations, curious and interesting as they are, do not constitute the most

important feature in the Bible Society's enterprise. The great task of Bible revision as well as Bible translation is going on continually. At this present time nearly a hundred different versions are being made, or improved, or completed in various parts of the world. The work is carried on by missionaries and scholars and linguists, generally organized in companies or committees under the Bible Society's auspices, and often at its expense. We may give some examples of revisions which are now proceeding, or unfinished translations which are being completed, in many tongues. The revision of Diodati's classical Italian version makes progress, and the four Gospels and the Acts are just published. The revision of the New Testament in Yiddish is now almost complete. In Catalan St. Luke's Gospel has been newly translated by a committee of Catalonian scholars. Arrangements have been made for improved or corrected editions of the Bible in Bulgarian, in Bohemian, and in Slovenian. The Archimandrite Scriban of Bucharest, one of the best known and esteemed among the monastic clergy of the Orthodox Church in Rumania, has undertaken for our Society to modernize the orthography and revise the archaic expressions in the Rumanian New Testament.

Three more Complete New Testaments.

During the past year the New Testament has been completed in three more languages. One of these is Nguna-Tongoa, for certain islands in the New Hebrides, needed by the Presbyterian mission. Another is Ulawa, for the Solomon Islands, needed by the Melanesian mission.

At the instance of the Orthodox Missionary Society

of the Russian Church our Society has also published the New Testament for the first time in Chuvash, for a tribe in the valley of the Volga, as well as a revised edition of the four Gospels in the Ersa dialect of Mordoff. We had previously co-operated with the Orthodox Missionary Society in publishing the Gospels in three other dialects spoken by Tatar tribes in the Russian Empire.

Amid the troubles in the Near East we are at length—after being for ten years forbidden by the Turkish authorities—allowed to issue the four Gospels in Albanian, printed in the modified roman alphabet which is known as the 'national' character. It has been arranged to prepare and publish in this form the complete Albanian Bible.

For South Africa, the revised Tabele New Testament is in the press. The Bible will shortly be completed in Nyoro for the C.M.S. mission in the Uganda Protectorate, and in Nyanja for the U.M.C.A. mission on Lake Nyasa. The New Testament in Nyasa Nyika is now in the press.

For India, the translation of the Nepali Old Testament is making progress; the Hindi Old Testament and the Mundari New Testament are being revised. For China, the revisers of the Mandarin Old Testament have arranged for a more rapid completion of their arduous task.

Last year it was found necessary to republish the Gospels in Manchu, from the version which was first printed at St. Petersburg in 1835 under the supervision of George Borrow. For more than half a century there had been no demand for these books; but a missionary of the C.I.M. who recently visited Chinese Turkestan found a number of tribesmen

who understood the Manchu translation and asked for copies.

For Mongolia, our sub-agent, Mr. Larson, with the help of Mr. Almblad and assisted by local Mongol scholars, has prepared a revision of the four Gospels and the Acts, which removes from the standard Mongolian translation of Stallybrass and Swan, made seventy years ago, such words and phrases as have become obsolete. In this work much assistance has been rendered by Prince Hanta Dorchi—a high official at the court of the 'Bogda,' or Incarnation of Buddha, at Urga—who has set free a Mongol teacher from other duties to take part in the revision.

The Union Ibo Bible.

Ibo is the language which overwhelmingly predominates in the central and eastern provinces of Southern Nigeria, where it is spoken with dialectic variations by quite 4,000,000 people. Indeed, it appears that among all the many other tongues of West Africa only Hausa and Mandingo can claim anything like such a currency. In the past, more or less incomplete translations of the Scriptures have been current in three dialects of Ibo, spoken within less than a hundred miles of each other. These three versions were made at three centres: into Niger Ibo at Onitsha, under the C.M.S.; into Isuama or Lower Ibo at Bonny, under the Niger Delta Pastorate; and into a third dialect at Ungwana on the Cross River, under the United Free Church of Scotland mission. The whole Bible had been published by the Bible Society in Niger Ibo, the translation having been mainly executed by Archdeacon Dennis, of the C.M.S.

In 1905 a conference representing the three missions

just named met to consider the production of a new union version of the Ibo Scriptures, to supersede the three existing translations in the Onitsha, Bonny, and Ungwana dialects. This project was warmly approved, and entrusted to Archdeacon Dennis as chief translator, with the aid of several native assistants. The Union Ibo New Testament was printed by our Society and sent out to Nigeria in 1909, and more than 5,000 copies have been sold at 1s. each, 6d. less than cost price. On the whole the reception of the Union Version has been very gratifying, and all whose opinion is really worth having are now agreed in speaking enthusiastically in its favour, many of them having been converted to it since its first appearance. This being so, its ultimate success is assured. That some, at any rate, of the Ibo people have learnt to appreciate their indebtedness to the Bible Society for giving them the Word of God in their own tongue may be inferred from the generous offering towards the Society's funds made at last year's harvest thanksgiving services in the Ebu district. From eight congregations, consisting for the most part of people as yet unbaptized, came offerings which amounted to not far short of £40.

To translate the Union Ibo Old Testament took two full years. But in June, 1911, the work was finished, and an edition of the complete Bible will reach Nigeria before the year 1912 closes. The total cost of this new version to the Bible Society cannot be less than £2,000, and will probably amount to much more.

Collateral Benefits.

We may illustrate some of the collateral missionary benefits of such an enterprise by the following

extract from an article written by Archdeacon Dennis in the spring of 1912:—

"It is only right to emphasize the fact that the occupation of Ebu, which is far and away the greatest forward movement ever made by the C.M.S. in the evangelizing of the interior Ibo country, would in all human probability have been indefinitely delayed but for the Bible Society's generous grant-in-aid towards the expenses of producing the Union Ibo Bible. This is important, in view of the 'Moslem menace' threatening the Ibo country in common with the rest of West Africa.

"While engaged mainly in translating during my five years at Ebu, it has yet been possible for me to superintend the labours of a small band of native evangelists and teachers in that hitherto entirely unevangelized district of the Ibo country. The result is that places of worship have been erected in perhaps a score of different towns, several hundreds of young people have learnt to read the New Testament, a goodly band of converts has already confessed Christ in baptism, and there is a large number of inquirers; while from all around deputations are constantly coming to us begging for teachers and offering to house and feed them. So the future seems bright with hope. While it is true that 'there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed,' great strides have been made in the evangelization of the Ibo country since Bishop Tugwell, on the occasion of his first journey through its interior six years ago, reported to the C.M.S. Committee that we had but 'touched the fringe of it'; and, under God, this advance is mainly due to the Bible Society's action in furtherance of the Union Version."

The Hebrew Text.

The edition of the Old Testament in Hebrew which Dr. Ginsburg is preparing on behalf of the Bible Society has made further progress, so that both the Earlier and the Later Prophets have now been published as separate volumes. This Hebrew text, accompanied by an elaborate record of variant readings, upon which Dr. Ginsburg is expending

such profound learning and discriminating care, presents the results of his collation of Jacob ben Chayim's text of 1524–5 A.D. with over seventy Hebrew MSS. and many early editions. We may, indeed, say that it embodies the ultimate product of a long life devoted to unremitting investigation of the whole complex Massoretic system which plays such a vital part in determining the accurate sense of the Hebrew Scriptures. The Pentateuch having been published already, two of the three parts into which the Hebrew Canon is divided have now been completed. Dr. Ginsburg is at present engaged upon the third part, known as the Hagiographa, including the Psalms, Proverbs, Job, the Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Daniel, Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles.

A Latin Testament.

In the first week of the present year a new edition of the Latin New Testament was published jointly by the Oxford University Press and the Bible Society. The text is as far as possible that of the great Oxford edition of the Vulgate, edited by the late Dr. Wordsworth, Bishop of Salisbury, and Professor H. J. White, who has prepared the present *editio minor* with remarkable care and skill. A select *apparatus criticus* appears at the foot of each page, and marginal references are given, based upon those provided in the English Revised New Testament with fuller references, recently published by the University Presses. The system of paragraphs adopted in the English Revised Testament of 1881 has been followed in the new volume, which is produced in a delightfully clear and scholarly style and in a form which

can be carried in the pocket, and is sold at various prices from 2s. upwards.

The Bond of Union.

Regarding the Authorised Version of the English Bible, Mr. S. R. Gardiner, the historian, wrote: "In its production all sectarian influences were banished, and all hostilities were mute." Again and again translators of diverse Churches have proved the unifying influence of Holy Scripture. The Bible Society is constantly privileged to draw together scholars of different nations and communions round the one Book. In addition to such service abroad, specially in the foreign mission field, important conferences have been successfully held last year at the Bible House, London, regarding united translation in languages like Hausa and Kashgar Turkish; while missionaries at work on Ganda and Swahili have met under the same roof to take counsel about their versions.

A fresh edition of the Asami New Testament has become necessary for the use of missions in Assam. Our Committee have cordially agreed to a request received from the American Baptist Mission that the B.F.B.S. shall publish an edition of the Baptist version of the Asami New Testament, and separate editions of the Gospels, with the word for "baptize" and its cognate terms transliterated in the text. The Bible Society is bearing the expense of preparing the copy and of proof-reading, as it has already done in the case of the Asami Old Testament. This forms one more happy solution of difficulties arising out of differences of opinion between Christian men.

An International Language.

Last year a curious experience befel one of our Russian colporteurs in the Caucasus, which he shall relate in his own fashion :—

"In the course of my travels a number of people asked me if I had the Gospel in Eksperanta (sic). Not knowing anything about this, I thought they were making fun of me, or that it was some journal called by that name. And one day when a common peasant asked me if I had Eksperanta, I told him that I did not carry such foolish things about along with the Word of God. At last a priest in Vladikavkaz asked me if I had the Gospel in Eksperanta. So I told him how I had been troubled by others with the same question, and asked him what was the meaning of it all. He explained that it was a new international language, the same for all peoples, and that there were many writings out of many languages translated into it, and that parts of the Bible had also been translated into it; he said also that it is written in the Bible that the time would come when all peoples would praise God with one tongue. So if there are Gospels in this new language, I humbly ask you to let me have a supply."

Many will be interested to learn that the New Testament has been translated into Esperanto, and that the version is now undergoing a second and final revision before it passes into the printer's hands. This Esperanto Testament will be published by the Bible Societies, by means of a special fund which has been raised for the purpose by zealous Esperantists.

The *Weltsprache Verein* of Nuremberg has kindly supplied us with versions of St. John iii. 16, according to the three principal modern attempts to provide an international universal language. This is how the familiar text, "God so loved the world," etc., appears in Volapük, in Esperanto, and in Ido.

VOLAPÜK.

Alsò God eilöfòm volì, dàs egivòm Sonì Calpemotöl okà, dàt valikàn, kredöl len omì, no deulòm, sod aìla Comös lifì tenüpìk!

Pastor F. M. Schleyer, Constance, 1885.

ESPERANTO.

Car Dio tiel amis la monden, ke li donis sian solenaskitan Filon, por ke ĉiu, kiu kredas je li, ne pereu sed havu eternan vivon.

Dr. L. L. Zamenhof, Warsaw.

IDO, OR REFORMESPERANTO.

Nam Dĕo amis la mondo tante, ke il donis sua unikgenitita filio, por ke omni it qui kredas ad il, ne perdesar, ma havez eterna vivo.

Linguo Internaciona di la Dĕlegitaro, Paris, 1908.

In Sixty Scripts.

To print these hundreds of versions of the Scripture, the Bible Society must employ many curious and complicated scripts. No fewer than sixty different alphabets are needed to represent the translations in such forms as are most familiar to their readers. Some of these are of astonishing complexity or quaintness. In India, the Marathi alphabet contains over three hundred letters, or combinations of letters. In North America, Cree and other 'agglutinative' languages are written in what is known as syllabic character. To write Chinese it is estimated that altogether 40,000 different characters are required. Only from 8,000 to 10,000 are needed, however, in printing the Chinese Bible; but an ordinary Chinaman would be considered educated if he were familiar with a still smaller number.

The Japanese characters were originally derived from the Chinese, and demand corresponding patience in a learner. Fresh stimulus has been given to a scheme for adopting roman characters for writing the Japanese language. A society in Japan which includes many influential people—among whom is the Prime Minister of Japan—recently held an important meeting at which the Prime Minister stated that the time had long gone by when the utility or feasibility of this reform could be a subject for investigation, and that attention should now be devoted to carrying it out in a practical manner. It was then decided to raise funds for such a campaign. This important leading from one so high in the affairs of the nation gives ground for hope that, enormous as are the difficulties to be encountered in such a reform, they are not to be regarded as insuperable.

Korea happily possesses already a simple and efficient native script. More than four centuries ago a form of writing was devised, of such a sort that the poor, the prisoner, the slave, the butcher, the baker, the hat-mender, the water-carrier, the sorcerer, the secluded wife and mother, could all read it. One potent factor in bringing about the acceptance of the Bible in Korea has been this easy form of writing, which has helped to make the Bible the first printed book widely received and valued in the Korean script.

Sincere Flattery.

Imitation is sometimes the sincerest form of flattery. The Moslems of the Panjab have published at Lahore an edition of the Koran in its original Arabic,

which in binding and appearance is obviously intended to resemble our Society's editions of the Bible in Urdu. A similar compliment has been paid us by the Buddhists in Japan, who have issued their own sacred volume the "Tripitaka" in exact imitation of the Japanese Bible, with similar type, morocco yapp binding, red-gold edges, and silk marker, and with a folding map resembling that of St. Paul's journeys, but illustrating the spread of Buddhism. In Senegambia some Arab traders from Morocco recently asked our sub-agent for the address of the printers of the Gospels published by the Bible Society in the Mogrebi dialect of colloquial Arabic. They desired to publish the Koran in exactly the same form, so that it might externally present a similar appearance.

Conquests of the Bible.

Bishop Westcott was fond of referring to an essay famous in the eighteenth century as an attack upon Christianity. One of its arguments then seemed sufficient proof that the Gospel could never be intended for a universal message—the argument that there were nearly a hundred known languages in the world and that it was absolutely impossible that the Scriptures could find expression in them all.

To illustrate the wonderful way in which the Bible has conquered and subdued the confused tongues of mankind, we may refer to a work which has been completed only a few months ago.

As far back as the year 1899 our Committee resolved on the preparation of a "Historical Catalogue of the Printed Editions of Holy Scripture in the Library of the Bible Society." The task was entrusted

to Messrs. T. H. Darlow and H. F. Moule, and the first volume of the Catalogue, comprising the English section and containing 428 pages, appeared at the end of 1903. The second and final volume, which includes polyglots and editions in languages other than English, was published at the end of 1911. This concluding volume contains 1,750 pages, in smaller type than Volume I., and has been issued, for convenience of handling, bound in three parts. The elaborate indexes were compiled by Mr. A. G. Jayne. The work as a whole has received unstinted praise from some of the first bibliographers in England, Germany, and America.

The Catalogue has been planned throughout on a historical basis—that is to say, under each language-heading all editions, whether complete Bibles, Testaments, or separate portions, are arranged in strictly chronological order, according to their dates of publication. This method exhibits the history of Bible translation in any language, and has peculiar value as tracing the evolution of those missionary versions which our Society exists specially to promote. In order to make the sequence complete, every edition which forms a vital link in the lineage of a version has been inserted in its proper place, such editions being enclosed within brackets when they are not represented on the shelves of the Bible House Library.

The Catalogue describes nearly 10,000 separate editions, while many hundreds of other editions are mentioned in the supplementary notes These editions are arranged under 628 different language-headings. This total, however, includes a few obsolete languages, besides 65 modern dialects in

which versions have been published by scholars for merely philological purposes. Thus the Catalogue shows that some part at least of the Bible has now been published with a religious or missionary aim in quite 550 distinct forms of human speech.

Such a Catalogue provides a conspectus of what has been hitherto achieved in one great field of Christian enterprise. Some book or books of Holy Scripture have been now made accessible in languages current among more than seven-tenths of the people of the world. In another aspect, the Catalogue becomes a record of the consecration of human learning and intellect to the Book of God. What centuries of labour, what generations of patient scholarship, lie behind those editions and versions of the Scriptures which are registered here! In yet another aspect, the Catalogue constitutes a chapter in the ever-expanding volume of Christian evidences. It supplies an abstract and brief chronicle of the wonderful way in which the Bible can subdue to its service the manifold forms of human speech. We venture to hope that the work will also assist and encourage new translators and revisers of Holy Scripture in their endeavours "to undo the curse of Babel and to carry out the blessing of Pentecost."

THE WEALTH OF NATIONS

"There is no Wealth but Life. Life including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration. That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings."

RUSKIN.

FOR Englishmen the year covered by this report has been crowded with great events and still greater anxieties. All our people united to keep the solemnity of the Coronation, followed as it was by the splendid Durbar at Delhi. But social and political strife has not been more acute within living memory; and industrial conflicts on a scale without precedent have strained well-nigh to breaking-point the bonds which knit together our complex modern civilization. Once, at least, during this last year the general peace of Europe was in grave danger. To-day there is war in Tripoli, and anarchy in Persia; while the vast empire of China has been shaken by an astonishing revolution, whose end no man can foresee or predict.

Nevertheless amid thick-coming changes, and omens of change, faithful souls find refuge and quietness in the Rock of Ages. We praise God more fervently than ever for the things which cannot be shaken and which remain. Above time's tumult the Divine Voice speaks clearly: "Heaven and earth

shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." To publish this everlasting Gospel among all nations is the high calling of the Bible Society.

A Record Circulation.

The past year has outrun every precedent in the history of the Bible Society. With profound thankfulness to God we can announce a record distribution of the Book which brings home to needy hearts the unsearchable riches of Christ.

For 1910–11 we reported a circulation which surpassed all its predecessors, and only just fell short of 7,000,000 volumes. We have now to report for the year ending March 31, 1912, issues amounting altogether to 7,394,523 copies of the Scriptures. This wonderful result is made up of 968,377 Bibles, 1,584,262 Testaments, and 4,841,884 smaller Portions —mainly Gospels or Psalters.

We observe that the issue last year of complete Bibles was 65,000 more, and the issue of New Testaments was 385,000 more than in the year previous, while the issue of Portions was less by 31,000—the net increase being 419,000 volumes. The increase is chiefly due to sales of the Society's new and improved edition of the penny English Testament. Of these penny Testaments altogether nine and a half millions have been issued, at a net loss to the Society of over £27,000.

Looking out across the Society's larger fields of labour, we note that last year 450,000 books were circulated among the Latin Continental nations; more than 700,000 among the German and Slav peoples of Central Europe; 558,000 in the Russian Empire; more than 200,000 in Africa; 270,000 in

South and Central America; and 210,000 in Canada. Among the dense populations of Asia, 920,000 books were circulated in the Indian Empire, and 1,650,000 in China, notwithstanding the revolution: both these totals exceed all previous records.

From the London Bible House.

The issues from the Bible House in London increased last year by 433,000 volumes. Two-thirds of the Society's total issues, however, are printed abroad, for the most part in the countries where they are distributed and read.

In 1909 the London Bible House sent out 2,260 cases of Scriptures, weighing 272 tons; in 1910, 2,845 cases, weighing 333 tons; and in 1911, 3,664 cases, weighing 415 tons.

The largest shipment of Scriptures which ever left the London Bible House in a single day was a consignment for Johannesburg, on January 1, 1912. It consisted of ninety-three separate cases, whose total weight was 11 tons 9 cwt.

The largest single consignment of Scriptures which has ever left the Society's depôt at Berlin was despatched to St. Petersburg on October 24, 1911, and amounted to 85 cases of books, weighing over 12 tons.

From the Society's depôt at Shanghai nearly 2,000,000 copies were sent out last year, weighing over 200 tons.

Depôts at Great Centres.

To make God's Book accessible in all countries, and to distribute versions at the centres where they are most needed, the Bible Society maintains its own depôts for storing and sending out the Scriptures in nearly a hundred of the principal cities of the world. You find these treasure-houses, for example, at Moscow and Madras, at Madrid and Melbourne, at Budapest and Buenos Ayres, at Toronto and Tiflis, at Rome and Rio and Rangoon, at Canton and Calcutta

and Constantinople and Cape Town, at Valparaiso and Vancouver, at Sydney and Shanghai and Singapore. It is astonishing to learn that the Scriptures have been sold in nearly fifty different versions from our depôt at Winnipeg, and in more than seventy different versions from our depôt at Johannesburg.

For British Readers.

It is worth while to observe that of the year's issues more than a million and a half volumes have been in English or Welsh, mainly for readers in the British Empire. We rejoice that this total is 276,000 volumes in advance of the figures for 1910–11, which again were 137,000 above those for the previous year.

In our own country the Bible—"the most precious thing that this world affords"—is to-day of all books the cheapest and the most common. But this result has been brought about by the ceaseless labours and sacrifices of the Bible Society more than by any other cause. Its popular English editions are sold by hundreds of thousands every year, at prices which are far below what the books cost to produce and publish. And it is continually making grants of the Scriptures, free or at nominal rates, to the schools and home missions of nearly every Christian communion, and to all the varied agencies of religious and philanthropic activity.

In Greater Britain the same work is carried on, organized under Colonial auspices and adapted to Colonial needs. Thus, to take only one example, the Society's sixpenny edition of the Dutch Bible is the cheapest book in South Africa, where it has helped to heal the wounds of war.

Photo by *Underwood & Underwood.*

ON A CANADIAN WATERWAY.

The Invaders of Canada.

The Dominion of Canada to-day contains seven millions of people. Canadian statesmen predict confidently that in fifty years' time there will be fifty millions between Newfoundland and Vancouver. During 1911 as many as 350,000 immigrants entered the Dominion from abroad, representing dozens of races and speaking scores of tongues. David Livingstone used to say that "no great emigration took place in our world without accomplishing one of God's great designs." Last year, in Canada and Newfoundland, the Bible Society sold the Scriptures in fifty-eight different languages and dialects. Fifty colporteurs were employed more or less continuously among settlers in the backwoods and on the prairies, as well as in the towns. Here are some sentences from a Canadian colporteur's report:—

"There are about 1,500 foreigners in this town, including Poles, Italians, Hungarians, Servians, Russians, French, Spaniards, Greeks, with several other nationalities. I have worked among the people principally in the evenings, for that is the only time you can find them at home. I had the satisfaction of placing the Bible or portions of it in a good many homes. One promising feature lies in the fact that the children are learning to read English, and in several cases I have sold English Bibles and Testaments to children of foreign parents. If we can educate, nationalize, and Christianize the coming generation, Canada need fear nothing from the foreigner."

The Bible Society has published diglot editions of a Gospel or Gospels, each giving the English side by side with a version in some one of the following twenty-nine languages:—Arabic, Armenian, Bohemian, Bulgarian, French, Finnish, German, Gujarati, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Judæo-

German, Lithuanian, Malayalam, Mandarin, Marathi, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Rumanian, Russian, Ruthenian, Servian, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu, Turkish, and Urdu. Many of these diglots are specially issued to meet the needs of the polyglot immigrants who pour into the Dominion from Europe. For thousands of new settlers in Canada these Gospels serve as the primers from which they learn the English tongue.

The Making of Nations.

Historians have waxed eloquent about the influence exerted by the Bible over the literature and the life of a nation whose people read its pages in their own familiar speech. The late Professor Teza of Padua, who died only this year, ranked among the most distinguished men of letters in modern Italy. In a lecture which he delivered before the *Accademia* of Florence, he maintained that the literatures of Germany and England owe their undeniable superiority—their richness, their variety, their high moral tone—to the fact that the Bible has been for centuries in both countries the book of the people in their mother-tongue. Professor Teza went on to say that Diodati's Italian version of the Bible might have done as much for Italy, if intolerance in the past and prejudices in the present had not made it a forbidden book for the great majority of the Italian nation.

The Religion of the Bible.

Moreover, when we search deeper into the roots of national faith and national character the potency and virtue of the Scriptures can hardly be exagger-

ated. We may cite the testimony of Cardinal Newman,* who certainly wrote on this point without prejudice or partiality :—

"Bible religion is both the recognized title and the best description of English religion. It consists not in rites or creeds, but mainly in having the Bible read in church, in the family, and in private. Now . . . the reiteration, again and again, in fixed course in the public service, of the words of inspired teachers under both Covenants, and that in grave majestic English, has in matter of fact been to our people a vast benefit. It has attuned their minds to religious thoughts ; it has given them a high moral standard ; it has served them in associating religion with compositions which, even humanly considered, are among the most sublime and beautiful ever written ; especially it has impressed upon them the series of Divine Providences on behalf of man from his creation to his end, and above all, the words, deeds, and sacred sufferings of Him in whom all the Providences of God centre."

For Albania.

In describing the awakening patriotism of the Albanians, Mr. H. N. Brailsford † points out that it is only in our own generation that these mountain clansmen, amid their tribal feuds and jealousies, have begun to seek for a bond of union, and have found it in their common language. The new spirit came with the cult of the Albanian language, which has transformed the mental outlook of the people. Among the real pioneers of this movement

* *The Grammar of Assent*, ed. 1891, pp. 56, 57.

† See *Contemporary Review*, September 1911.

Mr. Brailsford mentions the colporteurs of the Bible Society.

The Albanians themselves thankfully acknowledge the long and patient labours of the institution which for fifty years has endeavoured to bring to them the knowledge of God's Word in their own tongue; for they realize that it is mainly the result of these labours that they have attained to whatever moral and intellectual enlightenment they now possess. The Society's magazine has recently published special articles by Midhat Bey Frasheri, the national poet of Albania and editor of the most widely-read Albanian newspaper, whose *nom de plume* of Lumo Skendo is a household word in his own land. He is the most distinguished of a little band of Albanian writers whose heart and soul are in the task of bringing to their country the gifts of civilization, education, and peaceful progress. Though he is a Moslem, Lumo Skendo writes:—

"Above all, I feel constrained to offer a just tribute of gratitude to the British and Foreign Bible Society for the services which it has rendered to our country and literature, by its translations of the Holy Scriptures into the Albanian language. It is, in fact, impossible to speak of the language and literature of Albania without recalling the labours and the devotion of those who for so long, and in the face of so many difficulties, have carried on this noble work. Those Albanian versions of certain books of the Old and New Testaments in Gheg and Tosk, which for so many years formed almost the entire printed literature of Albania, have made the British and Foreign Bible Society honoured and revered among all patriotic Albanians, whether Moslem or Christian."

The Church of Rome.

In almost every country where the Roman Church is powerful to-day, it still denies the Scriptures

to the common people, it still fights implacably against a free and open Bible in the vulgar tongue. In countries like England and the United States its opposition is comparatively veiled and harmless. But in those lands where its priesthood and religious orders have public influence and authority, these are strained to the utmost against the books and agents of the Bible Society.

To this "deplorable, disastrous" policy of the Roman Church (as the Bishop of Oxford has described it) there are happily occasional exceptions. Here and there some pious and enlightened priest will encourage the Bible-seller and counsel his flock to read the Scriptures. And in one or two countries we find some partial and guarded attempts by Roman authorities to popularize the Gospels in a cheap form.

The St. Jerome Society.

The most recent facts regarding the Society of St. Jerome in Italy, so far as we have been able to ascertain them, are as follows. This *Pia Società di S. Girolamo per la Diffusione dei Santi Vangeli* came into existence early in the present century, and for some years did noble and fruitful work from an enlightened Roman Catholic standpoint. It issued several hundreds of thousands of copies of the four Gospels and the Acts in a new modern Italian version. But latterly its operations came to be viewed with distrust and displeasure by the authorities at the Vatican, who had at first blessed and encouraged it. Without any formal or definite intimation, the Society was quietly paralyzed. The editing, republication, and dissemination of its version were taken out of the hands of its original founders, and are now very strictly controlled. The latest edition of the Italian Gospels and the Acts—which appeared in 1911, bearing the St. Jerome Society's name—shows that very significant alterations have been made in the original preface, which was the work of Father Semeria, and also in the footnotes of Father Genocchi. It is still more

noteworthy that this edition includes an appendix, consisting of 108 pages, described as a *Piccolo Manuale di Preghiere* (A Little Manual of Prayer), containing a Missal, a service for the Confessional, a Saints' Litany, etc.

Thus the Roman Church does not place the whole Italian Testament, including the Epistles, in the hands of the people at a popular price. It only supplies the Gospels and the Book of Acts, guarded by a preface and footnotes, *plus* 108 pages of typical Roman prayers.

On the other hand it was a pleasant surprise to receive early in 1911 a new French version of the Gospels and Acts, *approuvée avec notes*, bearing the following imprint: *Section française de la Société de Saint Jérôme pour la diffusion des Saintes Écritures, Lyon, place Bellecour*, 6, *Librairie du Sacré Cœur*, 1910. The little volume is stamped with the *imprimatur* of three high Roman Catholic officials, including the Archbishop of Lyons. It begins with the letter of approbation of Pope Pius X. and the preface which appeared in the original Italian editions, and it is sold in France at 30 *centimes*.

So detached an observer as the late Matthew Arnold wrote: "Even the fanaticism of Exeter Hall can hardly assert too roundly that the Catholic nations will never really improve until they know the Bible better." We rejoice, therefore, over every method by which the Roman Church spreads the Scriptures. But a great gulf still exists between that Church and ourselves in this respect. For example, the *Univers*—the leading Roman Catholic journal in France—published in February and March, 1911, five long articles against the Bible Society and evangelical propagandism in general, in which we are called "*une plaie universelle*," and said to represent foreign political influence.

In Brazil it is proclaimed from the pulpit that the Bible is an immoral book, and that the agents employed in its circulation are immoral men, who do not

believe in God, in Jesus Christ, in heaven or hell, or in the need of living a good life. On the other hand, it is encouraging to chronicle that in September, 1911, the *Rio Morning Post* published two long articles on the value of the Bible as a book of literature and morals. The articles bore the signature of one of the ablest and most respected among the Roman priests in Rio. He strongly urged men to read the Bible, declaring that if once they began this study they would never leave it off.

The Church of Russia.

The Orthodox Church of Russia in this respect presents an impressive contrast to the attitude of the Church of Rome. Last year the printing houses of the Holy Synod at St. Petersburg and Moscow supplied us with over 400,000 copies of the Scriptures in Russian and Slavonic. Our Society publishes several versions especially for the Orthodox Missionary Society of the Russian Church. Throughout the vast dominions of the Tsar, from Poland to the Pacific coast, the Government maintains its traditional friendliness to the Bible Society, which not only finds a welcome among all classes and conditions but enjoys special privileges of its own. From the railways and from the steamboat companies on the great waterways in Russia and Siberia we receive generous grants of free passes for colporteurs and free carriage for books. While Russians of all ranks, from the village "pope" among his parishioners to the colonel in command of his regiment and the superior of a monastery with his monks, meet the Bible-seller with encouragement and help.

Hindrances and Helps.

It is curious to note what complex causes and subtle reactions affect the circulation of the Bible. Governments act under ecclesiastical as well as political influence. In several of the fairest provinces and crown lands of Austria, licences are still refused to our colporteurs, and throughout that empire the selling of the Scriptures is hampered and opposed by fanatical priests, servile officials and medieval press-laws. In most Continental countries it is painfully true that socialism commonly implies a denial of all faith in God. There are millions of social democrats who mock at the Christian Gospel and resist and persecute the colporteur who brings them the Christian Scriptures. In Senegambia the French authorities have shown an intelligent appreciation of our Society's enterprise and have promised it their protection. In Madagascar, however, for some years past all Christian missions have had to contend with very serious obstacles arising out of the anti-religious attitude taken up by the French colonial officials in that island.

In Greece.

For the greater part of a century the Bible Society enjoyed full liberty in Greece, and was the source of supply of the Scriptures alike in ancient and in modern Greek all over the country. Its work was suddenly paralyzed eleven years ago by the prohibition of the modern Greek New Testament, because, through other agencies, new vernacular translations had been issued which met with disapproval. The Bible Society has since spared no efforts to persuade the Holy Synod to make a modern Greek version

Photo by Bourne & Shepherd.

From Wonders of the World.

THE GOLDEN LILY TANK AT MADURA, SOUTH INDIA.

of its own, at the Society's expense, and to sanction on its own terms the distribution of these authorized books. But all efforts have failed. The door closed against the New Testament has been doubly barred by the new Hellenic Constitution, which shuts out the whole Bible in the language of the common people. What this means to the national and spiritual life of Greece let those say who last year joined together all over the world in thanking God for three centuries of a vernacular English Bible.

In Rumania.

On the other hand in Rumania, as indeed in most countries dominated by the Orthodox Church, we have absolute liberty for our work, and frequently the warm assistance of the clergy. There is probably no part of Europe—certainly not enlightened and progressive Germany—where our colportage has fewer obstacles to surmount, or where the authorities, civil and ecclesiastical, are more ready to render the Society service. Last year in one Rumanian town a colporteur visited the police prefecture when the bishop happened to be present. The police officials asked the bishop what he thought of our colportage, and his reply was a splendid testimony to the Society's work. Turning to the colporteur, the bishop exhorted him to continue his work in the spirit of the Society, for this (said the bishop) was certainly the spirit of the Holy Ghost.

The Renascence of India.

Throughout the Indian Empire tides of change—political, educational, and religious—are unmistakably flowing faster. Perhaps the most significant

part of the dazzling pageant at Delhi was the announcement that the Government has frankly set itself to grapple with the enormous problem of elementary education. The new census returns show that Christianity is growing far more rapidly than the increase of population. The number of Indian Christians has increased from 1,509,000 in 1881 to 2,036,000 in 1891, 2,664,000 in 1901, and 3,575,000 in 1911. The experience of the Bible Society bears witness to a rapid expansion in the demand for the vernacular Scriptures. More people in India are learning to read, and they are reading the Gospels more than they ever did before. Our Society has published or circulated the Scriptures in eighty of the Indian languages and dialects, and last year 920,000 copies were distributed in the Indian Empire —an increase of more than 50 per cent. over the number circulated ten years ago.

We borrow a comment from the *Statesman*, one of the ablest and most influential newspapers in India:—

"It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of enriching so many Indian languages with renderings of a Book which, from the purely secular point of view, is not only magnificent literature, but full of the loftiest and most inspiring moral teaching."

"The Key to the Kingdom."

Such work is full of infinite potentialities. "Give a man a Bible," said Claudius Buchanan, a century ago, "and you give him something more than an earthly kingdom. You give him the key to the kingdom of heaven."

To-day Canon Liddon's words are truer than ever: "The teaching of Christianity in India has effected

changes—moral, social, and political—which have extended rapidly, and the facts are far more extraordinary than we or our fathers have witnessed in modern Europe. Those changes—do not let us be mistaken—are not conversions, but they are the preparation of the moral state in which conversions take place. Long before the Roman Empire became Christian, the air, so to speak, was filled with Christian ideas; the Christian creed was discussed and re-discussed by those who had not yet heard it; and while stray conversions took place in all ranks of life, most of the people remained apparently attached to the old paganism. In the middle of the third century not more than one-twentieth part of the population was Christian; in the next century conversions came with a rush; the ground had now been prepared, the seed at last had taken root and sprung up."

The Uprising of China.

All over the East the dawn is coming up at last, but it is coming up in thunder. The long history of China contains no more amazing chapter than the revolution of the past year, in which, almost without a struggle, the Manchu dynasty fell, and the new republic became an accomplished fact. Not even the most careful student of Chinese affairs saw reason to believe that the whole nation was on the extreme edge of the ancient order, ready to launch out into the depths of a tremendous political and social experiment.

The astonishing thing is not the revolt against Manchu domination, but rather the ideals to which its leaders have aspired, and the dramatic swiftness

and success with which those ideals have been pursued. The stupendous change from a jealously guarded autocracy to an extreme form of democratic government has been carried out with comparatively little disturbance, and in a spirit of great moderation and restraint; whilst its leaders have exhibited wonderful capacity, magnanimity, and devotion to the public weal.

It is much too early to build upon the stability of this new *régime*. The next generation will certainly be in the presence of a China very different from that to which we have hitherto been accustomed. But what strange shape it will assume is a question which few would venture to answer at present. Nevertheless, there is ground for confidence in the fact that so many leading men in the republican ranks have been educated in Christian schools and colleges. The new President, Yuan Shi Kai, has shown marked cordiality in receiving a deputation representing the Protestant Christians of Peking, to whom he made an important declaration, emphasizing with the utmost explicitness his resolve to enforce religious toleration throughout the republic.

Dr. Sun Yat Sen, who is generally described as the genius of the revolution in China, makes no secret of the fact that he is a Christian. He was born near Canton, where his father was a Chinese evangelist, and he qualified as a doctor in the L.M.S. medical school at Hong Kong. No other single individual is so directly responsible for the rapid political changes which have taken place in China. The friendly spirit in which the revolutionists as a rule have treated Christian missionaries

is perhaps partly due to his influence. To an interviewer Dr. Sun Yat Sen said a few months ago: "Our greatest hope is to make the Bible and education, as we have come to know them by residence in America and Europe, the means of conveying to our unhappy fellow-countrymen what blessings may lie in the way of just laws and what relief from their sufferings may be found through civilization."

Not only has the form of government changed in China, but the conditions under which missionary work will henceforth be carried on have changed also. New ideas have taken root in the minds of the people. They are coming to recognize that Christianity, so far from being destructive to patriotism, is, in reality, the source of national righteousness and the salt of social and public life. Already the British and Foreign Bible Society has distributed in China twenty-one million copies of the Scriptures. But hitherto the Chinese have regarded the Bible mainly as a foreign book: it is not too much to believe that they will begin to read it henceforth as the Book which reveals the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

The Charter of Missions.

The true charter of Christian missions—as Dr. Forsyth points out—lies deeper than any recorded command of Christ. Missions would be just as urgent and binding on us if the last page of St. Matthew's Gospel had been lost. Their urgency arises not so much from our Lord's express injunction as from the nature of His Person, from what He is and what He has done for us and for all man-

kind. And the mainspring of Christian missions is something mightier even than pity for a world lying in misery and wickedness: it is faith in Christ's victory and zeal for the rights which He has won.

The Steward of Modern Christendom.

Of missions in foreign lands the Bible Society is the indispensable partner and ally. Its warehouses form the arsenals which furnish arms and munitions for the world-wide Christian crusade. And missionaries are of one mind and speak with one voice as to the prime necessity of this equipment for their success. From the outset the Bible Society has been linked with all our great missionary societies in relations of the closest and most cordial kind. Missionaries abroad are its ablest translators, its most persevering and successful distributors, its most honoured friends; while the Society has no more ardent and generous advocates than missionaries at home on furlough.

In fulfilling its function as the steward of the modern Church, the Bible Society deals with no niggardly hand. It prints such editions as the missionaries ask for in the form which they desire, and sends the books out carriage paid to remote stations, on such terms that practically no expense falls on the exchequer of the mission which receives and distributes the books.

We may give a few fresh instances of this co-operation.

For Missions in India.

A concrete example from India will illustrate the way in which the Society's depôts form the store-

Photo by *Nicholas & Co.*

THE MAHAMAKAM BATHING FESTIVAL AT KUMBAKONAM, MADRAS

houses from which all missions draw supplies of the Scriptures in the various languages in which they are teaching and preaching the Gospel. The Bible House at Calcutta sends out editions in 47 different languages and characters. During the three months from December 1910 to February 1911 inclusive, 32,000 volumes were issued from this one depôt. Of these, Anglican missions received 6,800 books; Presbyterian missions — Scotch, Irish, English, Welsh, and American—received 6,300; Methodist missions—English and American—3,400; Congregational missions, 3,400; German missions, 3,400; the English Baptist mission, 3,000; while supplies of books were also sent to a number of smaller organizations.

Speaking at the London Bible House on July 1st, 1912, the Bishop of Madras confessed that as the result of twenty years' experience he realized more and more each year the enormous and incalculable value of the Bible Society to all mission work in India, adding, "It would be simply impossible for the work of the Church to be carried on abroad without your help." The Bishop was informed that the Society's printing bill at Madras for 1911 was £2,000 in excess of any previous record. He replied: "I hope that in ten years' time the excess will have reached £20,000."

In Central South Africa.

Here, as elsewhere, the increased missionary enthusiasm of recent years is showing itself in heavier drafts on the Bible Society. Practically all the Protestant missions in Central South Africa—representing not only British societies, but American,

German, Dutch, French, Swiss, Swedish, and Norwegian—draw all the vernacular Scriptures they require from our depôt at Johannesburg. Their varied needs may be gathered from the fact that the Scriptures have been supplied in twenty-nine African versions, while some missionaries have also obtained considerable supplies of books in several languages of Europe and India.

A missionary writes: "Enclosed please find a cheque for £2, for the funds of your Society, from our native church. The Nyanja New Testament, of which I have circulated over 100 copies among our 'boys,' is much appreciated by them, and the contribution now sent is a small recognition of the excellent form in which the Scriptures have been issued by your Society, and the low price at which the books are available."

In Uganda.

The Bible Society has published 232,000 copies of the Scriptures in Ganda, to say nothing of other versions for various tribes in the Uganda Protectorate. Last year over 17,000 copies were sold. During 1911, the adult converts baptized in the C.M.S. Uganda mission numbered 4,374, besides 1,677 infants—a total of 6,051, as compared with 4,621 in 1910. The contributions to the mission by native Christians amounted to *Rs.* 47,064—more than double the figures of 1910, and ten times the amount contributed in 1900.

For the U.M.C.A.

The secretary of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa writes: "In view of the part which your Society has kindly taken in connection with our printing-press on Lake Nyasa, and in cordial re-

A STREET IN FREETOWN, THE CAPITAL OF SIERRA LEONE.

membrance of the grant recently made in connection with this work, I send you an extract from *The Nyasaland Diocesan Chronicle*:—

"Our printing-press has been busily at work since it re-opened, . . . so that with the Bible Society's volume of the Four Gospels and Acts, we now have the whole Chi-Nyanja New Testament in two volumes. Priests-in-charge who have to keep churches and *sunagoges* going with daily lessons, and have up to now had to depend on single Epistles, will no doubt shout for joy.

"This edition is, however, only a limited one, and is meant to be temporary; the Bible Society, to whom we owe an immense debt of gratitude for their help, have paid for it on the understanding that copies are sent to native teachers for correction and suggestion, and that when these are collated the final edition will be printed by the Society in England. When this is done we shall at last have the New Testament in one volume."

The following letter from the Bishop of Nyasaland is dated October 7, 1911:

"It is impossible properly to express the value of your work for us in thus enabling us to place the Bible in our people's hands in their own language. You will realize fully how inefficient all our work must be apart from it; but I do wish to express my own personal gratitude and thankfulness. . . . I hope when I return to England, in the latter part of 1913, you will be able and kind enough to allow me to speak or preach for you, so as in some way publicly to express our sense of obligation and our gratitude."

For Yoruba Land.

The Bible Society has published versions in over thirty West African languages and dialects. At the present time translations or revisions are proceeding

in Ewé, Fula, Gu, Hausa, Ibo, Jolof, Kroo, Limba, Luna-Inkongo, Nupé, and Yoruba.

A highly important negro language of West Africa is Yoruba, spoken by some 2,000,000 people in the western part of Southern Nigeria. From the very first the preaching of the Gospel in the Yoruba country was attended with much apparent success, and the strongest and best organized churches on the West Coast to-day are to be found there. Bishop Crowther was of Yoruba extraction, as are also Bishop Oluwole, Bishop Johnson, and many other able and distinguished West African clergymen. The translation of the Bible was completed a generation ago, and the Bible Society has now issued 68,640 Yoruba Bibles, besides Testaments and Portions. The Yoruba Bible is sold for 1s.

The C.M.S. bookshop at Lagos, in Southern Nigeria, through its branches at five important centres, is now serving most of the Yoruba country. The number of copies of the Scriptures sold during the past year through this book-room was as follows: Yoruba Bibles, 11,127; Yoruba Testaments, 1,221; English Bibles, 2,743; a total of 15,091 volumes, as against 9,093 in 1910. During last year £625 was remitted from Lagos to London as proceeds of the sale of the Scriptures, besides a generous contribution of £409 to the funds of the Bible Society.

Archdeacon Dennis of the C.M.S. wrote as follows in the spring of 1912:—

"Christianity in the Yoruba country spreads, as it were, spontaneously, without the help of recognized missionaries or native agents. In the course of a journey I made from the great Yoruba city of Ibadan to the Niger, we approached a certain village in the eastern Yoruba country and noticed a

half-finished building, which we judged, from its appearance, must be intended either for a Christian place of worship or a Muhammadan mosque. We made for the house of the headman of the village, and there rushed in a small crowd of enthusiastic people, several of them with Yoruba Bibles in their hands, who greeted us warmly and informed us that they were Christians. We found that they had never had an accredited teacher, but owed their conversion to certain Christian rubber-hunters from a distant town, who had come with their Bibles, and, while staying in the village, had used the opportunity to teach such of the inhabitants as were willing to learn how to worship God and read the Bible. The humble converts they left behind them were continuing to meet together regularly to worship God and read His Word, one or two of the more advanced acting as teachers to the rest; and they, and not the Moslems, were erecting the small church we had seen."

"I had been asked by the secretary of the Yoruba mission to look up a band of Christians of whom he had heard, in a part of the Benin Country called Ora, situated in the district east of the Yoruba country, described as being 'absolutely without the Gospel.' The originator and leader of the remarkable work which I found going on at Ora was a native of the place, who had, years before, been sold into the Yoruba country as a slave, and while there, became a Christian and learnt to read the Yoruba Bible. On regaining his freedom he returned home and set about evangelizing his people. The Ora people having some knowledge of Yoruba, he was, when I visited the place, endeavouring to teach them to read the Yoruba Bible, copies of which, as well as of the Yoruba hymn book and prayer book, several had purchased. He presented for baptism quite a number of candidates whom I examined, and who were, shortly after, baptized. Though no European missionary has ever been stationed in the Benin country up to the present, yet visits have been paid to out-of-the-way Ora from time to time by Bishop Tugwell and others, and Bishop Johnson supervises the work as well as he can. A trained teacher—one of themselves—was afterwards provided, and the Bible Society has now published a translation of the four Gospels into Ora made by him."

MORE GOLDEN THAN GOLD

In Egypt and Syria.

The following missions were supplied with the Scriptures during 1911 for their centres of operation in the Bible Society's Egyptian agency:—

The American Presbyterian Mission, the Reformed Presbyterian Mission, the Swedish Evangelical Mission, the United Free Church of Scotland Mission, the London Jews' Society, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the North Africa Mission, the Church of Scotland Jewish Mission and Schools, the Egypt General Mission, the Church Missionary Society, the Irish and Scotch Reformed Presbyterian Mission, the British Syrian Mission, the Irish Presbyterian Mission, the Waldensian Mission, the Friends' Foreign Mission Association, the Africa Industrial Mission, the United Methodist Church Mission, the Africa Inland Mission, the Seventh Day Adventists, the Leipzig Lutheran Mission, the *Evangelische Africa Verein*, the Neukirchen Mission at Lamu, and the Swedish Mission at Kismayu.

Servus servorum Dei.

Surely the Bishop of Winchester had grounds for his memorable declaration at Farnham last summer: "There is no greater title than the title 'servant of the servants of God,' and no society better deserves that title than the Bible Society"

Since this Century began.

Some idea of the world-wide missionary service rendered by the Bible Society may be obtained by a brief statement of what it has accomplished since this twentieth century began. During the twelve years between April 1, 1900, and March 31, 1912, the Society has published versions in eighty-six fresh languages. These new versions include sixty-nine for the use of missions promoted by British or American societies; ten for German and Moravian missions; three for French missions; three for Scandinavian missions; and one for Dutch missions.

Among the sixty-nine new versions published for British or American societies twenty-five were especially for Episcopalians, twelve for Presbyterians, five for Congregationalists, four for Baptists, three for Methodists, besides twenty for more general use. Of the twenty-five versions published for Episcopalian missions fourteen were for the C.M.S.; five for the Melanesian mission; two for the S.P.G.; one for the U.M.C.A.; one for the S.A.M.S.; one for the Anglican mission in New Guinea; and one for the American Protestant Episcopal Church. Though a new version may be initiated by members of some particular mission and published for its special use, the Book is thereby set free to speak to all who use the new tongue, and it thus becomes available for any mission which may hereafter work among people speaking that language.

In the year 1900 the Society sent out 4,914,000 copies. In the year 1912 it sent out 7,394,000 copies. During this present century 71,488,000 copies of the Scriptures have been sent out into the world. More than 90 per cent. of these books have been sold, generally much under cost price. It is worth noting that in these twelve years—which are one-ninth of the Society's whole existence—it has published nearly one-third of its entire issues. This fact gives some idea of the enormous enlargement of its work in recent years—a growth which is going on more rapidly than ever.

Demands beyond all precedent.

The Society has never yet refused to publish a duly authenticated version of the Scriptures in a new tongue. It has never yet refused to print such

editions of the Scriptures as missionaries have declared to be necessary for carrying on their work. But in the whole course of its experience it has never before had to face such immense and imperious new demands as are knocking at the door of the Bible House to-day. The very progress and triumph of Christian missions involve ever-increasing claims on the resources of their common partner and ally. Will readers and lovers of the Bible compel the Society to refuse such requests, because its income falls far short of its needs?

The Society would have funds enough and to spare if only:

(i) Every grateful Bible-reader would contribute each year at least the cost of a single Bible for some one who does not yet possess God's Book.

(ii) Every organized Christian congregation would follow the example of so many infant Christian communities in the mission field, and would set aside each year some part of their corporate missionary alms for the provision of the missionary Gospel.

CURRENT COIN

"English Christians are agreed about this: they place the Bible in the soldier's knapsack, in the sailor's chest, in the emigrant's trunk, among the bride's presents, inside the coffin of the dead."

ARCHBISHOP ALEXANDER.

THE mission of the Bible Society remains unfulfilled until the New Testament is brought within reach of every man able to read it. To carry out this world-wide enterprise involves much more than translation and publication. It is not sufficient to print the Scriptures in hundreds of versions and in dozens of alphabets, to store huge editions in city depôts, and to distribute them by means of churches and missions in every land. The Book must be put into the hands of the people. Few of us realize that outside the congested centres of western commerce and manufacture the vast masses of mankind make their homes in scattered villages. In the Russian Empire, for instance, eight persons out of every nine are villagers, and in the Indian Empire nine persons out of every ten. To reach these great dispersed populations the Bible Society has developed its own staff of special agents. We call them colporteurs, and they travel beyond the beaten tracks, going from hamlet to hamlet and from door to door, and offering their

cheap little books at prices which even the poor can pay.

These wayfaring Bible-sellers belong to many races and speak many tongues. Being as a rule natives of the regions where they work, they are at home in the ideas and habits and dialects of the common people. Though members of various Christian communions, they are all able to testify out of their hearts' experience to the power and preciousness of the Gospel. Forbidden as they are to make proselytes or to detach converts from any Church, they can yet add their word of warm personal witness to commend the Book which they carry. The Bible Society employs about 1,100 of these colporteurs who are continuously at work, quite half of them among the teeming populations of China and India. During the past year their sales reached the record total of 3,300,000 volumes.

How they travel.

To realize how these men travel with the Scriptures along the highways and byways of the world we must picture to ourselves heavily-laden mules and donkeys, with the colporteur mounted or plodding behind on foot. Again the scene changes to a steamer on some broad South American river, or a canoe laboriously paddled or pulled up-stream. Among the green Indian rice-fields dark-skinned colporteurs in white turbans march noiselessly with bare feet, carrying their books on their shoulders. Across the wind-swept plains of Mongolia our Society has its own caravan of camels and ponies. In Upper Burma a Bible-seller drives his bullock-wagon with a yoke of bulls—the gift of some

friends in London. On a recent journey which he made into Anterior Tibet a missionary of the C.I.M. took with him a yak, laden with Tibetan Scriptures supplied by our Society. Some Abyssinian evangelists last autumn marched many days' journey from Zasega into their own province with "two mules' burden of books."

The title given by Anthony Hope to one of his novels, "The God in the Car," comes irresistibly to mind in connection with a recent experience. Our new sub-agent in Mongolia, Mr. Almblad, was unusually fortunate in his introduction to the town of Urga, where he resided during last summer. In the neighbourhood of this town are the headquarters of the Bogda, whom the Mongols consider to be the living incarnation of Buddha ; while the territories of our good friend, the Hanta Ching Wang, a powerful prince and one of the most intelligent Mongols in the country, lie not far away. When Mr. Almblad was making preparations to leave Kalgan, which lies near the Chinese frontier, in order to travel to Urga, he received urgent requests from the Hanta Ching Wang and the Bogda that he would help to bring up a motor-car which the Bogda had purchased in Tientsin. Accordingly, Mr. Almblad accompanied the representative of an American firm, who drove the motor-car from Tientsin to Urga—a distance of nearly 800 miles. The journey, though rough, was accomplished in safety and in an unusually short time. At Urga the arrival of the motor naturally created no small sensation. The fact that Mr. Almblad knew how to steer it, and was able to explain its mechanism in Mongolian, has won for him the confidence and goodwill of the highest officials, and even of the living Buddha himself—whom Mr. Almblad has taken for a drive in his new car.

A Ubiquitous Mission.

These Bible-sellers win their customers everywhere :—in the docks at Antwerp ; in the *cafés* and music-halls at Budapest ; among the apple-orchards

in Tasmania; down in the slums of Singapore; among miners on the Rand, and canal-makers on the Isthmus of Panama. In Southern Hungary, we are told, "even the shepherd-boys in the meadows may be found reading the Gospels." At the Irkutsk railway-station, in Siberia, five Buriat Mongols had to wait for a train to take them to the other side of Lake Baikal: they were seen squatting on the floor, while one read aloud to his companions from St. Matthew's Gospel in Buriat, which he had just bought from a colporteur.

For Railway-passengers and Pilgrims.

Railway-stations form a favourite vantage-ground for the colporteur. He sells his books to passengers waiting for the trains at Manila, at Rosario, at Buenos Ayres, at Winnipeg, at Peking. In the Chinese capital last year Colporteur Yao disposed of nearly 19,000 volumes at the railway-terminus, where he seldom misses a train, and the officials allow him perfect freedom in his work. Holy places where pilgrims resort are also visited by our Biblemen. One French colporteur has disposed of many Gospels and Testaments at Lourdes. A Russian colporteur confined himself last year to the sacred city of Kieff and its neighbourhood, where he disposed of nearly 3,000 books among the pilgrims who flock every summer to visit the shrines. Owing to an outbreak of plague, fewer pilgrims than usual were seen last Easter at Jerusalem, where our colporteurs always make good sales among these simple, devout, far-travelled folk. Colporteurs in the East have visited Buddhist shrines in Japan, and Hindu sacred places in the Himalayas, and the great *melas*

Photo by *H. C. White*

A CANOPY OF WISTARIAS IN JAPAN.

or religious festivals at which swarming multitudes congregate throughout India. Describing his work at one festival, Colporteur Athianandam says:

"Many pilgrims had come from distant places with the idea that a visit to the temple at this season would help them to obtain salvation. I entered into conversation with them, and offered my little books for sale. One Brahman asked whether sin could not be removed by bathing in the sacred waters. 'No,' I replied; 'they may cleanse the body, but Jesus Christ alone can forgive sins.' After hesitating a little, he bought one or two Gospels, and later I saw him reading aloud to a group which had gathered round him."

Ships and Seamen.

At those ports and harbours which form the water-gates of the world, our colporteurs stand on guard with the Gospel in many versions, to suit the needs of sailors and travellers of many races and tongues. At places like Las Palmas and Colombo and Alexandria their work goes on continually. At Port Said, where a motor-launch belongs to the Society, nearly 10,000 copies were sold last year, in forty-six different languages, on board the steamers passing through that wonderful artery of sea-traffic.

A Perilous Service.

The colporteur's vocation is no holiday task. Often it entails severe physical hardships, in the course of constant journeying through half-civilized regions, exposed to all extremes of climate. And it demands no small courage and tact and patience, if the Bible-seller is to win his way among careless or hostile crowds. Sometimes he will be cut off for weeks or even months from Christian help and fellowship. And not seldom he has to encounter grave perils in

the service of the Gospel. Last year in South India among the Eastern Ghats a colporteur caught sight of a tiger "crossing his path about a furlong ahead." In Burma a colporteur met a leopard "face to face." Another Burmese colporteur, who was swimming across a creek in the absence of ferry or bridge, narrowly escaped being drowned in the swollen current. On the river Magdalena, which swarms with alligators, two men ventured in a leaky canoe which took in water to such an extent that not only their books but their lives were endangered. In Siberia two colporteurs, who were travelling by sledge over the snow, lost their way in a blinding blizzard, until they were rescued by the sound of a village church bell which tolls all night during storms.

With Persecutions.

A darker chapter in our colporteurs' experiences records what they have to endure from evil men. Scorn and insults and foul abuse and petty tyranny sometimes culminate in open acts of violence. Our sub-agent in Brazil, writing of a successful Bible-selling tour on horseback in the State of Minas Geraes, where he and a Brazilian colporteur visited districts hitherto untouched by any Gospel agency, describes how in one place they narrowly escaped with their lives from a furious mob which stoned, kicked, and beat them. At a mountain village in Calabria, an Italian colporteur was set upon by the populace, armed with sticks and stones: he had to be protected by carabineers, who guarded the house while he slept. Near Avignon, a French colporteur was pelted and threatened by violent anarchists. In

Westphalia, where Colporteur Kunkel labours among the miners and ironworkers, he visited the ultra-clerical district of Paderborn. The *Paderborner Volksblatt* warned its readers of his presence. One man hunted the colporteur out of a house with a stick, in the street he was assailed with cries of "Lutheran devil! Beat him to the ground," while another man pitched him down a flight of stairs. In Dalmatia an able colporteur was arrested and marched away under a guard with fixed bayonets, on suspicion of espionage. At the town of Orcotuna in Peru, a Bible-seller was cruelly kicked, beaten, and even bitten by fanatical opponents. During the revolution in China, Mr. Fergusson, our sub-agent in Yunnan, had to escape down a river with his wife under a hail of bullets which fell about their boat, hissing and splashing in the water on all sides.

In the Persian Civil War.

The chaotic condition of things in Persia has multiplied the difficulties and dangers of Bible work in that country. A battle took place last autumn near Kermanshâh between the troops of the present Persian Government and those of the ex-Shah, under the command of his brother, the Salah-ed-Dowleh. Colporteur Ephraim Yonan, who had been engaged in selling books in the neighbourhood of the fighting, was arrested not far from Kermanshâh. He was suspected of being an Armenian who had come thither as a spy, or with some intention of killing the Salah-ed-Dowleh. Ephraim explained that he was a bookseller in the employ of the Bible Society; but his captors were strengthened in their suspicions, as Ephraim was the name of a certain Armenian

revolutionist who had assisted the nationalists in Teherân to dethrone the ex-Shah. At this stage things were looking very serious for our colporteur. After being taken to four different places, he was brought before the Salah-ed-Dowleh, who questioned him strictly as to his identity and occupation. In the colporteur's own words, "It was a terrible ordeal. As the Lord liveth, there was but a step between me and death. My life was saved, partly through the testimony of Dr. Macdo, a Chaldean Catholic priest, and partly through the name of my mother-in-law, whom the Salah knew in former years as the seller of jewellery to the ladies of his harem." The Salah finally offered Ephraim a position in his own service. This was politely refused, with an explanation that the colporteur had served the English Society for many years, and would be going against his conscience if he left it. Thereupon the Salah-ed-Dowleh said: "Bravo, bravo, you are a faithful servant!" and at once released him. Afterwards Ephraim went on to Kermanshâh. When the Salah came to that place he caused Ephraim to be brought before him again—this time to compensate him for all the trouble and hardship he had undergone. The Salah-ed-Dowleh conferred on him a title with a *firman*, thus making him a *khan:* the title means "Translator to the King."

A Colporteur's Escape in China.

Dr. G. A. Charter, of the English Baptist mission, Sianfu, writes: "We have employed more colporteurs this year, and all have done good work. The revolution began in Sianfu on October 22nd, and the massacre of Manchus in that city took place on a

Photo by Prince Abdul'a Mirza. *From Wonders of the World.*

FATIMA'S SHRINE AT KUM, THE SACRED CITY OF PERSIA.
THE DOME IS OVERLAID WITH PURE GOLD TO THE
DEPTH OF ONE-EIGHTH OF AN INCH.

Sunday, when our Manchu colporteur, Chao Feng-teh, happened to be at morning worship in our chapel. Thus he escaped with his life, and fled into the country. Twice on the way, however, he was recognized as a Manchu, and thought his end had come. On each occasion he knelt down in the road and prayed for God's protection, and each time his enemies allowed him to pass on in peace."

Saving a Chinese City.

The Rev. W. W. Robertson, of the China Inland Mission at Taichowfu, writes : " Our colporteur's work was interrupted by the summer rains and great floods, and later in the year by the brigandage that is rampant as a consequence of flood and revolution. But even in such times God has ways of using His servants ; and, so far as we can see, this colporteur has saved the city of Taichowfu from attack. It came to pass in this way. He put up one night at an inn in a market-town in the extreme south-east of the district. After he had retired, a belated traveller arrived and occupied the same bed. In the morning the unknown traveller resumed his journey before others were astir. When the colporteur rose he found a letter in the bed, under the quilt. No one at the inn knew anything about it, so he concluded that the late occupant had dropped it. As this man did not return the letter was opened, when it was found to be from a notorious brigand chief, addressed to two lesser leaders, calling on them to assemble at a given hour on a given day to assault Taichowfu. Much information was added as to the strength of their forces, etc., and the purpose of the attack was stated to be the massacre of the prefect, the foreigners, and the

police, and the destruction of chapels and schools. The colporteur came direct to the city without divulging his secret, and we laid the letter before the prefect in time for him to gather sufficient forces to frustrate the design. He had had no warning of danger, and his garrison was quite inadequate. For some time afterwards the city was in imminent peril, but after sustaining heavy losses in repeated fights near their rendezvous the brigands retreated. It is appalling to think what might have happened had the city been taken unawares by a force estimated at 10,000 brigands."

Cholera in Sicily.

Cholera was rife last summer in Sicily, where the more ignorant folk believed that the Italian Government was spreading the disease to get rid of the surplus population. Sometimes our colporteurs were suspected of being officials sent to spread contagion. Women cried after Colporteur Licata, "Death to him! He comes to disseminate cholera." Others, through sheer dread of infection from strangers, refused to let him approach them. Frequently our Biblemen had to undergo disinfection. In one month Colporteur Greco was fumigated seventeen times.

The True Spirit.

Here are a few examples of the Christian temper and spirit in which these wayfaring Biblemen carry on their difficult duty among all sorts and conditions of men.

In a Sudanese market quite a number of people had gathered round to see an Egyptian colporteur's books. "I was asking a Moslem why he objected

even to hold a book in his hand, when a Copt called me on one side and asked if I was aware I was selling to Moslems. He then said, 'You should go and sell to Christians, and if they refuse go and leave them.' I told him that I had come to sell the Scriptures to all people, and especially to those who did not want to buy them."

A Japanese colporteur was attending a Y.M.C.A. meeting in a town near Kagoshima when two young men came up and said that they were very glad to meet him again, as they wished to apologize for their misconduct to him nearly five years before. At that time the young men had joined a little group to whom the colporteur was trying to explain the Gospel, and had each bought a Testament; but they had become very irritated at what he said, and succeeded in breaking up the gathering; one of them threw a stone at him, and wondered why he did not resent it. They went home to read their Testaments, became interested, and to-day they are both Christians.

Turning the other Cheek.

From Port Said an Egyptian colporteur writes: "I offered my books to a number of young Moslems. 'Know you not that we are *Muslimeen?*' one asked. Another took a book, and after examining it, threw it on the ground, struck me, and said, 'Go, you *kafir*.' A few days after, I went forward to a company of young Egyptians, not noticing that one of them was the man who struck me. He rose and said to me, 'Be seated.' Then he said, 'I am sorry that I struck and insulted you. I did so because I had heard that your book taught that if you were struck

on one cheek, you were to turn the other also, and I wanted to see if you would act according to its teaching. I now want the book in which such teaching is given.'"

Once a Chinese Soothsayer.

Colporteur Tschen, who works in connection with the Berlin Mission at Tsingtau, in Shantung, is a man of prayer, whose whole soul is in his work of leading men to Christ. His own report is full of quaint personal touches:—

"I confess that when I first approached the Christian Church, it was in the hope of finding salvation, not for my own soul, but for the souls of my departed parents. They appeared to me in my dreams, exhorting me to obtain some relief for them. Then I discovered that I myself needed salvation and help. I had been a soothsayer for many years, and it was easier then to make my living than it is to-day; still, I rejoice to be my Lord's messenger. 'How is it that you gave up that fine business?' people now ask me. 'You managed so very well to cast a man's nativity, to choose days, and predict our lucky or unlucky days! And now you are selling these foreign books; and since they are in the country, the gods have sent us plague and famine in their wrath!' 'Listen to me, my honourable brethren. No soothsayer knows his own fate, and how should he know that of other people? Since I have read this small book, I know my destiny to be a saved child of God, and that makes my future life bright and hopeful, because I found in this Gospel my Saviour.'"

Photo by *Captain Tatton Brown.*

AN INTERESTED CHINESE CROWD. THE OLD MAN IN THE MIDDLE IS A COLPORTEUR.

The Secret of Success.

In the province of Shensi, the Rev. G. F. Easton, of the China Inland Mission, Hanchung, writes of an aged colporteur: "Though Chang is 72 years of age he often tramps 200 miles in a month, carrying his load of books himself, and calling at every place, however small, to sell and explain the Gospel. A few days ago, when he was about to start out, I went to see him off. I found him in his room, committing himself and his work to the Lord. I caught some sentences: 'Prepare men's hearts to receive the Word. Help me to give my testimony. Don't let conceited men argue with me. Don't let the books get wet. Show me how I am to get over the swollen rivers. Don't let the dogs bite me. Take care of my wife.' . . . When he had finished I said, 'It is very wet, you had better wait a day.' 'No,' he said, 'on wet days I can often sell books in the inn to weather-bound people,' and off he went. Thus the work is being done with care and prayer, and it is not without definite encouragement."

Colportage in Korea.

To-day there is no place in Korea where the Scriptures do not penetrate. They have passed the doors of prisons and hospitals and leper-asylums, of wine-shops and brothels, of gambling and opium dens, of the palace and the store. They enter the filthy hovels of beggars, the mountain temples of Buddhist priests, and the thatched huts of the poor. They have found their way into the fisherman's sampan and the ferryman's punt, as well as the school and the college; and from all these have come forth, through the reading of the Gospels, "twice-born men."

MORE GOLDEN THAN GOLD

Colporteur Choi visited a large village in An San county which did not contain a single Christian. He found it more than difficult to sell a Gospel. At one house he asked for a bowl of drinking water, in exchange for which he gave a copy of St. John. The owner of the house, Mr. Pak, invited the colporteur to step in and rest. Choi took advantage of the opportunity, and as they sat in the guest-room he explained to Mr. Pak the way to God. Mr. Pak's heart was touched. It was the first time he had heard of Jesus Christ. After the colporteur had gone, he read the Gospel, and finding that all within him was darkness, he began to long for further knowledge. When the colporteur returned to the village, he found Pak ready to greet him, and had the joy of leading that soul out of heathen darkness into the blessed light of God. To-day Pak is himself an earnest and successful colporteur, telling everywhere what great things the Lord has done for him, and offering to other thirsty souls the same Cup of Salvation from which he first tasted Divine Life.

A Fortune-teller's Fortune.

A Chinaman named Wang bought a Gospel in the spring of 1910. He was then earning his living by telling fortunes at markets and fairs. He read his Gospel, and came into the city to have it explained. Then he realized that he had found the truth; so he gave up his little portable table and his fortune-teller's books, lest he should be tempted to use them again. After this, he and his small family starved for several months, until, on the recommendation of the Christians, the Rev. H. Payne, of the English Baptist mission, Tsowping, ventured to try him as a colpor-

teur. Though his neighbours did not object to Wang's fortune-telling, they were quite opposed to his selling "foreign books," and several of them caught him one night and gave him a beating. But the man stuck firmly to his decision to serve Christ, and both he and his wife were baptized. Now, four or five of the men who ill-treated him have bought New Testaments from him, and have invited him to bring a teacher to their village to explain more fully than Wang himself can what the Book teaches.

A Polyglot Staff.

Here is an example showing how Christian men of different races serve side by side in this common task. The Society's Egyptian agency possesses a staff which is curiously polyglot and international. The agent is an Englishman; the assistant in the depôt at Port Said is a German; the depôt-keeper himself is a Greek, who also speaks Turkish and a little English; an Armenian is depôt-clerk; and other helpers include a British subject who has been making a colportage tour in Cyprus, and an Abyssinian, who, in addition to Arabic and Amharic, can speak Tigrinya and Tigré. At Alexandria our colporteurs include one German, one Italian, and two Copts. At Port Said a Scotchman has charge of the colporteurs, whilst an Englishman, a Christian Jew, and an Armenian are working under him. In Cairo our colporteurs are a Syrian, who speaks five languages, and a Copt. At Khartum our new depôt in Sirdar Square is in the hands of a Christian Spanish Jew and a Copt. At Jerusalem the depôt is in charge of an Armenian, who speaks several tongues besides his own. We thank God for

the happy fellowship which unites men of many countries and communions in the work of publishing the one story of redeeming Love. Those "variations of the Protestant Churches," which Bossuet derided and denounced, shrivel into insignificance within the Bible Society. Under its auspices the reunion of Christendom has already, to some extent, begun.

Among Australian Settlers.

In the remoter districts of South Australia, a colporteur has been set apart to tour with a Bible-van and a pair of horses among pioneer settlers and scattered homesteads. In Queensland three Bible-wagons were at work last year, each with a colporteur in charge, doing excellent service among isolated farms in new districts. To meet the needs of neglected and sparsely-peopled portions of New South Wales, often remote from all regular Christian ministrations, two colporteurs have travelled far and wide with untiring energy and loyal service. During last year they journeyed 3,177 miles, visited 5,406 homes, and distributed 4,014 copies of the Scriptures. With a heavy load and indifferent roads, the rate of progress is necessarily slow; yet, comparing the number of miles travelled with the number of books sold, the average is more than one volume per mile. Just before the close of the year the New South Wales Auxiliary engaged a third colporteur, who has set out enthusiastically on his mission.

At the Society's anniversary last May, Mr. Taylor described a colporteur whom he saw in Australia—a weather-beaten little man, grown grey in the service. He has travelled during the last twelve

years some 24,000 miles with horse and wagon, right away among the 'back blocks'; he has visited 32,000 homes, and sold over 30,000 Bibles. In one lonely little homestead he met an old man drawing to his end. He spoke to him of the Book and of the Lord revealed in it. The man said, "You will find one there. Take it down from the shelf." It was a well-used copy; he opened it, and it opened of itself at a page which said: "And He will save thy children." The old man spoke of his mother, and recalled the days in the old homeland when he had heard her pray for him; but he said pathetically, "I was seventy years old before those prayers were answered."

Tact and a Ready Tongue.

Born salesmen some of our colporteurs seem to be, always ready with shrewd answer and apt argument and telling quotation, with homely mother-wit for plain folk and respectful speech for people of high station, becoming all things to all men, if only they may leave the Gospel in the hands of some.

"Your books may be good," a French colporteur was informed, "but they are out of date—no longer *à la mode*." "No," he replied, "they are like a mirror: for that does not change, yet it helps us to distinguish between what is good or bad *mode*."

The Saint of Saints.

"If your books spoke of the saints, I'd buy them willingly," remarked an elderly Italian woman at Pianella, in the Abruzzi. "My good woman, the books speak of the Saint of saints." "Who is your

advocate in heaven?" "Jesus, the Son of God," replied the colporteur.

Peace and War.

In Italy last year the thirst for war news and war debate lessened for a time opportunities for Bible work. But sometimes this very eagerness was skilfully used to introduce the message of the Prince of Peace. Colporteur Vecchi retorted one day at Florence that his business was to speak of peace, not of war; and not of peace with the Turks alone, but of something far more important—peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. At first Vecchi's reply provoked laughter and derision. But the discussion now turned upon the Gospel, and a young man who had been foremost to deride ended by purchasing the Scriptures. He admitted that the question of our disposition towards God's holy will is infinitely the most important of questions for us all.

All Unclean.

In the Euphrates valley a colporteur writes in his journal:—"When I was offering my books in the market, a Moslem *sheikh* came to object. While I was speaking with him, my hand touched his clothes. Then he blamed me and said, 'Why have you polluted me?' I answered, 'How have I made you unclean, my brother? Are you not a son of man like myself? Have we not all become impure, and are we not in need of the Holy One to make us clean?' Then I showed him the Testament, reading 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.'

Photo by *The Photochrom Co.*

ST. MARK'S CAMPANILE, VENICE.

Then the people listening said 'It is true, it is true,' and I sold over 80 copies."

A Burmese Monk.

Maung Shwe Bwin, a colporteur in Burma, had sold many books in a large riverside village. Then he went to the village monastery, and reverentially bowing to the monk, placed before him in order the four little Burmese Gospels in their pretty coloured wrappers. At first the monk was very discourteous. "I want no Jesus Christ books: take them and yourself away." "Very good," said the colporteur, "but has your reverence considered your position? In this place I have sold books to many people. Even the women and the children have bought. Is it fitting that the monk should be the only person in the village who has not a copy of the Jesus Christ book?" "I must reflect about this," said the monk—and after a little while he bought a copy of each of the Gospels.

Too much Vodka.

A Siberian peasant at Perm had just paid for a Bible, and while he was putting his change into his purse he asked the colporteur quite confidentially, "Say, brother, dost know a cure for giving up a bad habit—the habit of taking too much *vodka?* I know it is bad, and I'm resolved to overcome it." "You just try reading a chapter of the book you've purchased," answered the colporteur; "if you read seriously, the desire for strong drink will depart from you."

One God Everywhere.

In Annam, Colporteur Hy is a man of ready speech. "So you say that there is only one God?" an Annamite asked him; "You are mistaken. The Annamites worship one god, the Chinese another, the Japanese another, and the French another. There are as many different gods as there are different nations on the earth." "Look at the sky!" replied Colporteur Hy. "It is the same in Annam, in China, in Japan, and in France. Now look at this book. It is the Word of God. It is everywhere the same, though written differently in Annam, in China, in Japan, in France. God loves all men, and will have His book come to all. In the same way He gave His Son that all, whoever they are, who believe on Him, may have eternal life. Can you say that of your god?" The Annamite stretched out his hand for a Gospel, advising the bystanders to do likewise.

A Swearing Carter.

In the north of Italy Colporteur Trabbia was tramping between Turin and Beinasco and asked leave to rest his bag of books on a passing cart. The driver invited Trabbia up into the cart, but soon, in the course of conversation, began to utter foul oaths, so Trabbia asked whether he believed in the existence of God. "I have never seen Him," was the response. "No," said the colporteur; "then why blaspheme the Person whose existence you do not believe in?" As the cart rolled on they talked about the Scriptures, and Trabbia read what happened once on the Gaza road, in the chariot of the treasurer of Queen Candace. The carter showed keen interest, and finally bought a New Testament.

Robbers and the Gospel.

Two Chinese colporteurs, attached to the American Presbyterian mission at Yeungkong, were stopped on a mountain road by a band of robbers, who shouted, "Wait and show us what you have in those bundles over your shoulders. Have you anything valuable?" "Yes, indeed," came the reply from one colporteur; "we have the most valuable thing in the world, and we shall be glad to show it to you. Just look at these books. This is 'John's Good News,' and this is 'Matthew's Good News,' and this is the 'Record of the Disciples' Doings.' They tell about the ten-thousand-kingdoms' Saviour who delivers from sin. The books cost ten *cash* in the Kwantung dialect. Won't you buy some?" The robbers actually did buy several copies and paid for them, and allowed the colporteurs to go on their way in peace.

A Roland for an Oliver.

In Central France Colporteur Roland met with the objection, "Let us alone, we will not change our religion!" His retort was unexpected: "You are right. You must *not* change your religion. It is your religion that must change you."

"I want nothing," exclaimed a lady to him on one occasion, "You are fortunate, indeed, *madame*, if you really want nothing. I believe that you *do* want something. If you had that, your happiness would be more real. 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' You already have the goods of this world—here is the Gospel." In the end the lady bought a New Testament.

A Faithful Servant.

From Korea we learn that Colporteur Kim's faithful donkey "Skylark" died last summer. "Skylark" had made a name for himself, because he used to pretend to eat books. When a man refused to take a copy, Kim would hand it to the donkey and say, "Why, look here; this donkey knows more than you, for he takes what is offered him." "Skylark" would obediently take it between his lips, and the customer, with a laugh, usually followed the wise donkey's example, and went off with the book. Now the faithful little animal is gone, and Kim has to carry his load on his own back: but we hope to be able to get him another donkey later on.

We turn to record thankfully some of many instances of how the colporteurs meet with welcome encouragement and assistance.

At a Russian Monastery.

In the far north of Russia Colporteur Maslennikoff, who had met with an accident, landed in June, 1911, at the Solovetski monastery, beyond Archangel. Here the Russian monks not only treated him with the utmost kindness, but even took charge of his books and sold for him some 500 copies of the Scriptures.

"Buy these Books freely."

At the Rustschuk railway-station Colporteur Athanasoff was accosted by a Bulgarian priest, who said to him, "Why are you in such a hurry to distribute these books in Bulgaria? Our Holy Synod has its own version of the Gospels, which are genuine, while

yours are Protestant versions." "Sir," said Athanasoff, "sixty years ago, when we were groaning under the Turkish yoke and as a nation were dead, the Bible Society printed these Scriptures in the Bulgarian tongue; without them we should have had no Bible, and no Bulgarian would have known that the Lord Jesus Christ suffered and died for our sins." To which the priest replied, "I wonder if your Gospels are written in good Bulgarian and not falsified; let me see." Then taking out his own copy of the Synod's edition, he proceeded to compare the versions attentively. After some time, while the people were all waiting for his verdict, he pronounced our translation to be very good, and in some passages even better than the Synod's version. Then buying five copies of our New Testament for himself, the priest said to the bystanders, "Buy these books freely and without the least fear." Then he said to the colporteur, "Farewell: may God bless you and give you health and strength to accomplish your sacred work with good success."

At the Gordon College.

Our colporteur at Khartum sold some New Testaments and Gospels at the Gordon College. Both the Christian teachers and Moslem *sheikhs* of the college asked the blessing of God upon the Bible Society.

Not at any Price.

In Peru, Colporteur Herrera entered one house where a man greeted him gladly. "I have a Bible, but I want a copy in larger print," said he. "My father would not part with the Bible at any price, and he is so thankful that it can be obtained by all

at such a low cost. Yours is a great work for humanity, that of circulating the Sacred Writings." Then an aged man came forward, with a book in his hand. Herrera saluted him and offered him a Bible. Smiling quietly, he said, "For many years I have read that book every day. It was bought from a good man who offered the treasure at my door. I am eighty-five years old, and I can still see to read, but I will take advantage of your visit to buy a larger-type book. When I lie on my death-bed I shall want only the Bible read to me, for in it I have found peace for my heart and salvation through Jesus Christ."

At a Military Camp.

From Siberia Colporteur Krisoff writes: "I visited the summer military camp at Michaelova, near Lake Baikal. The colonel of the regiment refused to grant me a pass; but the general of the division, after perusing my documents and my letter of recommendation from the Russian army chaplain, enquired very kindly as to my success among the soldiers. He purchased a Bible, a pocket Testament, and the Pentateuch in Russian. Before I left, the general ordered a pass to be made out in my name, certifying that I had the right to move about the camp during the summer months in order to sell the Scriptures."

At Vladivostock.

Colporteur Tchebikin, who travels along the Pacific coast of Siberia, has a pile of permits and passes, signed and countersigned by various generals, commanders of regiments, divisions, batteries, etc. He also possesses a rare privilege—a free pass to the

naval citadel on "Russian Island," which forms the main defence guarding the entrance into Vladivostock harbour. An old soldier himself, he is particularly well fitted to carry on colportage among the soldiers and sailors, and he has shown great tact and sagacity in utilizing his opportunities. During last year Tchebikin paid several visits to Vladivostock, where he gradually went through most of the fortresses and barracks with the Scriptures.

In Dalmatia.

From the variegated and picturesque field of Dalmatia our colporteur sends one of those rare stories of a tolerant monk which sometimes brighten our pages. Some villagers who had ordered the Scriptures from him went to an old Franciscan monk to ask his opinion as to the books. "Read diligently in them," said the monk; "live as this book tells you to live, and you will become better men." The monk afterwards bought a Croatian Bible for his own use. In Igrane a Roman priest shielded the colporteur from the attacks of a mob, and expressed his pleasure at being able to buy a Bible.

A reasonable Franciscan.

In Poland it is the custom just before Christmas for the monks to drive through the country collecting gifts from the villagers. Colporteur Brozda met one of these monks, a Franciscan, and showed him his books. The monk read the titles, and hesitated when he saw "Leipzig" as the place where a book was printed. "Poles," he said, "should only buy the product of our own country. Why should we support those Germans?" The colporteur pointed

out how cheap the books were, and how dear they would be had they been printed and produced in Poland. The Franciscan bought the four Gospels for himself, and several copies for the children of the house who were clinging round his habit. After a while he recommended Brozda's books to the people of the village.

Jews in Exile.

In a remote part of the island of Cyprus our colporteur visited a small colony of Russian Jews, who had taken refuge there from persecution in their own country. One aged Jew exclaimed: "Even to this corner of God's earth the Bible Society sends us the Scriptures."

"Food for the Soul."

"When travelling by rail," writes a Siberian colporteur, "I came across a peasant who seemed delighted to meet me. 'Give me a copy of the New Testament at a *rouble*," he demanded. On receiving it the peasant doffed his cap and eagerly kissed the book, saying, 'This is our comfort and joy, and to all who believe in Christ Jesus.' Then, turning to the other occupants of the car, he said, 'Brothers, buy a copy of this book; in it you will find food for the soul!' With such a powerful colleague, I was able to sell several copies in that car."

The Book which speaks to the Miserable.

In the west of France Colporteur Rousseau was passing one day by an empty gipsy-wagon when he

saw with surprise the whole family sitting in the sunshine on a tree-trunk and listening to a young man, one of the sons, while he read aloud to them. What was the book? A New Testament. Rousseau recognized these poor gipsies; he had sold them the New Testament during the vintage of the previous year. They also knew him again, and told him how much they loved to read the book, "which speaks chiefly to the miserable and to sinners."

In a Paraguayan Prison.

While Colporteur Iglesias was visiting a sugar factory in Paraguay, one of the workmen there took up a Bible and exclaimed, "Thank God! at last I have the book which I have so long desired." He quoted several passages of the Scriptures from memory, but declared he had never seen a Bible before. It appeared that in 1904 this man had been imprisoned at Asunçion, the capital of Paraguay. One Sunday a gentleman came to visit the prisoners, and distributed some papers among them. One paper which this prisoner read referred to the Bible as the most important book in the world, and cited a number of texts which made a great impression upon him. When he came out of prison he did his best to get a Bible, applying to all the booksellers in Asunçion without success. Our colporteur afterwards received from him the following letter: "I am glad to tell you that since the day I read the holy book, my spirit rejoices. I have left the way of error, and have embraced the truth, for the book has opened my eyes."

Waiting for the Bible.

In a French village Colporteur Galibert found a man who for thirty years had wanted to buy a Bible. "I have been waiting for you for thirty years," he exclaimed; "I have applied for a Bible in vain to all booksellers and to the *curé*. No one could get it for me." The colporteur says that this man's joy, when he at last became the possessor of the sacred volume, cannot be described.

To Print a Testament for Himself.

In Croatia a blacksmith whose eyes were failing had taken his small-print New Testament to the neighbouring town, hoping that a printer there would print him a copy in big type. Great was his distress to find that the cost was far beyond his means. So he waited for years, until our colporteur came to his village and he was able to buy a large-type Bible.

Polyglot Negroes.

The polyglot capacity of some negroes is quite remarkable. Mr. Irving, a colporteur at the mines in Johannesburg, sold to a man from Central Africa a Nyanja Testament, a Yao Testament, a Swahili Testament in roman character, and a Swahili Gospel in Arabic character. The purchaser was able to read them all, as well as books in English.

At another compound near Johannesburg, where the number of native labourers had recently increased to 6,000, Mr. Irving found in one room quite a large number of the men were quietly reading their Bibles, while in another room the labourers were on their knees, led in prayer by

one of their comrades, who was a Wesleyan local preacher from Cape Colony.

Are the Scriptures read?

Such incidents mean that the Scriptures are read and pondered by those who purchase them, for the natives of South Africa never purchase what they do not intend to use. Frequently several will pool their spare cash and buy a copy of the Scriptures to be their common property. They then gather round one of their number who reads aloud for their common edification.

Emigrants from Central Europe.

During the year under review the Society employed four colporteurs at different centres, who met the streams of emigrants on their way to America, and offered them the Scriptures in their mother-tongues.

At Myslowitz, a point where the Empires of Germany, Austria, and Russia meet, Colporteur Jendrny sold 6,500 copies among the emigrants passing through that important junction.

Colporteur Kunkel labours among the emigrants at the port of Bremen, meeting thousands of Lithuanians, Bulgarians, Russians, Poles, Bohemians, and Jews, all on their way to seek prosperity in the New World. His sales amounted to 4,032 copies. In countless instances he met men and women eager to buy the Scriptures. They would have time to study God's Word on their long journey.

Colporteur Mausch at Hamburg circulated 10,314 copies in eighteen different languages among emigrants leaving that great German harbour. The variety of the work is astonishing, and as to its value and importance there can be no doubt.

Teaching Aboriginal Tribes.

In the heart of China the great mountainous pro-

vince of Yunnan forms a refuge for many aboriginal tribes who live on its lofty table-lands, among limestone crags and rushing torrents. Beginning in 1904, a remarkable movement towards Christianity took place among the Miao tribe. In connection with the United Methodist mission and the C.I.M. over 18,000 have been baptized. Last year at an open-air communion service 1,000 Christians assembled with great reverence on the hill-side under the blue sky.

"Wherever there are Christians the colporteurs go, visiting and teaching the people, young and old, to read the Gospels. In many cases the learners have tried not simply to read but to memorize the books. It has been a joy to the missionary again and again to come across people who could repeat several chapters, one after the other, with scarcely a mistake. A number of the Hwa Miao Christians, the young people especially, were aiming at repeating the whole of St. Mark and St. John."

"In scores of villages, in hundreds of rude homes may now be seen, in a rough-made little box, a bundle of books and tracts. Some have been sewn together between pieces of foreign newspapers, others tied between thin boards. The greater part of these little cottage libraries are composed of portions of God's Word. A few years ago these poor villagers were enclosed in high walls of ignorance. Now, thanks to the Bible Society, these walls have been pierced, and the people are looking out on the vistas of eternity and infinite love."

A Pathetic Appeal.

Our sub-agent, Mr. Amundsen, was travelling in August, 1911, across the highlands of Yunnan, and reached a plateau 8,000 feet above the sea, surrounded by magnificent mountains. Here he came upon a village of Miao aborigines, with a large Christian chapel, where he was heartily welcomed, and constrained by the villagers to stay over night "to teach them more of the Bible." They listened

eagerly to the visitor. Among them was a young man from a quite different tribe, the Nasu, or "Red wild" tribe, as the Chinese call them. The young Nasu looked on and wondered. "What do you worship?" asked Mr. Amundsen. "Wood and stone," was his reply; "but can you not also make a book for us Red tribe people? Can't you make just one copy for me?" To this pathetic appeal Mr. Amunsden could only answer: "But we do not know your language yet." "I will give you my language now," was his reply, and forthwith there was "given" a considerable vocabulary, which was carefully written down for future use.

Biblewomen in the East.

Besides its colporteurs, the Society maintains about 600 native Christian Biblewomen, mainly employed in connection with missions in Eastern lands, where great multitudes of women are shut off from the Gospel unless they learn it from a sister's lips.

* * * * *

The movement continues to make progress, whereby colporteurs or Biblewomen abroad are specially maintained by gifts from individual friends at home. In China, in Korea, and in Japan, there are now 199 colporteurs and 26 Biblewomen thus supported, representing altogether 125 generous friends of our Society. Is there any more simple and effective means by which Christians in England can make known to God's disinherited children the unsearchable riches of Christ?

THE HEART AND THE TREASURE

In his "Lives of the Poets" Dr. Johnson tells us that he asked Collins, the lyric poet, to let him see the companion of a man of letters in times of toil and sorrow, and that Collins handed him a New Testament, such as children then carried to the village school, exclaiming: "I have but one book, and that book is the best of all."

THE Bible refuses to allow us to treat it like any ordinary book. Year by year the records of our own Society—were there no others in the world—prove its incomparable worth and its moral and spiritual potency. They show us numberless instances of how God honours it, how He seals by His Spirit its work upon the hearts of men, how He uses it even without human help and teaching to beget in solitary souls an incorruptible life.

There is no other book half so vital and urgent and insistent as the Bible. It cannot be read without creating responsibility in the reader: something reaches out from it (as Dr. Denney has said) and compels him either to choose the good part, or to make through baseness the great refusal. And the sense of this makes some people reluctant or afraid to read it—because the Word of God is living and operative and tests and searches their hearts. "In the drama which the Bible unfolds there are

no spectators: everybody is drawn into the action. What the Bible holds up before us is the Lord's battle, and it calls upon every man to take His side."

In the Argentine, for example, a man who was leading an evil life confessed to our colporteur: "It fills me with fear to read the Bible, so I have hidden mine at the bottom of my trunk." In Hungary last year Colporteur Csordas found many people not only ignorant of the Scriptures, but quite averse to possessing them. "On the Day of Judgment," they said, "we shall be able to tell God that we did not know what His Will was; but if we buy the Bible, we cannot use this plea." Here is an extract from the journal of one of our colporteurs in Ceylon:—

"At a certain village I visited a man who is in the habit of receiving bribes for bearing false witness in the courts. He asked and paid for a copy of Proverbs. The next day, however, he brought it back and said he did not require such a book, because 'it tells quite against me, and reproves too much every one who is in the wrong paths.' He begged me to take the book back and return the money."

Counterfeit Coin.

One of our French Biblewomen was asked by a lady to step into her house. "I bought a New Testament from you," said the lady, "but I cheated you. I gave you a bad 10 *centimes* piece. I knew it, and since reading the book I have been filled with remorse and have wished to meet you again, that I might give you another 10 *centimes*."

A Chinese colporteur had a curious experience near Canton with a man who purchased St. Matthew's

Gospel and handed in a counterfeit 10 *cent* piece, receiving his change in good copper *cents*. A few days later the colporteur received the following letter :—

"Greeting. Your servant purchased from you, the teacher, Matthew's Good Tidings book with a view to cheat you by using a bad coin. I received the book and returned home. All night I was not at peace. I opened the book and read. I perceive I have great sin and wickedness. Unfortunately your servant is but a day-labourer, and has no leisure to go to a chapel to study the doctrine. I urgently beg you to pray Jesus to forgive my sins. Now I am writing some words and enclosing a good 10 *cent* coin for you. Please accept this, and do not lay blame upon me. At a later day I surely shall meet you and exchange greetings."

Cured by the Bible.

The alchemists in the Middle Ages believed that a solution of gold was curative. Chaucer tells us that "gold is phisike in a cordial." And this is a parable of the healing and medicinal virtues contained in the Book which is more golden than gold.

At Rosario a Bible was sold to a builder named Carlos, whose companions told the colporteur: "It is a pity that Don Carlos ever read the Bible: since he bought it, he never comes to the hotel to drink, but always goes home to his Book."

On a sugar plantation in Peru, a man working at the *hacienda* of Casa Blanca made this confession to Colporteur Espinoza: "Before reading the Bible I was a great drunkard; but reading it has quite changed me. Without fear or hesitation I can say that I am a new man." All the bystanders agreed: "It is quite true, he is a new man; before, he was very bad, but now he has changed completely."

Many of them bought Bibles for themselves through seeing the good that the Book had done.

The New Testament not only pierces men's consciences and reforms their conduct: it also illuminates their inward understanding, it brings them face to face with the Redeemer and Restorer of their souls. We will quote a few recent examples of the mighty spiritual power of the Scriptures.

On an island of the New Hebrides a native evangelist named Lomai helped the Rev. Frank Paton to translate St. Matthew's Gospel into Lenakel. This man confessed in broken phrases how his version of the Gospel and his Christian character reacted upon each other: "Before, my heart not right, and I no get the word of Jesus straight: now, my heart right a little bit, and I get the word of Jesus more straight; by and by I get it straight altogether."

Away in an almost inaccessible valley among the hills of Upper Burma a village head-man first became interested in Christianity through reading a Gospel purchased from a wandering colporteur. Four years ago he was baptized, and has remained the sole yet loyal witness for Christ in that remote valley. The nearest Christian service is three hundred miles away, but to this isolated disciple his New Testament has stood for four years in the place of minister and church and sacrament.

Gordon's Testament.

A Chinese teacher at Shanghai, whose father had held a command in General Gordon's "ever victorious" army, told last November the following experience: "When Gordon bade my father good-bye, he presented him with a beautiful copy of the Chinese New

Testament. My father never read it, but kept it among his treasures. When I was about fifteen I found the book and read it constantly, though not as a believer. Some years afterwards I met a colporteur who was selling similar books. He talked to me, and discovered that I knew already a great deal about the Gospel. From this we grew intimate, and eventually I became a Christian. The Testament which Gordon gave my father is still preserved in our family."

"Now, I love it."

At Vladivostock, our Siberian colporteur received a shower of most grateful thanks from a soldier in the 5th Rifle Regiment for a copy of the Gospel which had been given him the year before. Taking the colporteur's hand, he said: "Up to the time of meeting you last year I knew that there was a book called the Gospel, but I knew it only by name, and nothing at all about its contents, although I had sometimes attended service in church. Now, thanks to your generosity, I understand it, and love it. Long before to-day I have endeavoured to find you out and thank you." The soldier then bought with his own money a Russian New Testament.

"Consolation."

A Bulgarian had migrated into Rumania, where he worked as a gardener. During his noonday rest it was his daily habit to take out his New Testament and read it with great attention. This attracted the notice of his master, who said, "What book is it that you read with such interest every day and never seem to finish?" The gardener replied, "The name of this

Photo by Johnston and Hoffmann. *From Wonders of the World.*

ONE OF THE AVENUES OF PAGODAS WHICH FORM THE KUTHODAW AT MANDALAY,
WHERE THERE ARE WITHIN A SPACE ABOUT HALF A MILE SQUARE,

book, sir, is *Consolation*." "Well, let us hear a little of your consolation," said the master; and the man read aloud from the Sermon on the Mount. "Why, this book is the Gospel?" "Yes, sir," said the man, "but I call it *Consolation*." His master laughed and replied, "I know your book well enough, but that is quite a new name for it: in my opinion, you could not give it a better."

"Ammunition."

An old Burman Christian, white-haired and lame, lives sixteen miles from Pegu, and walks in to service and back with unfailing regularity. He carries in his hand a length of hollow bamboo, which is his staff. But it is something more: it is his arsenal. For inside are folded together, with his spectacles in their leather case, the neat little Gospels published by the Bible Society. These he calls his "ammunition." Fellow travellers know Ko San Myin well, and disputants dread him, for he uses his "ammunition" in spiritual warfare against Buddhist opponents with deadly effect.

"The Mirror."

In his speech at the Society's anniversary last May Mr. Daniel Crawford gave this testimony to the New Testament among the negroes in Belgian Congo.

"There was a craze in our tribe for looking-glasses, and each member of the tribe must have a looking-glass. Well, a native gets saved, and he buys his copy of the New Testament, and he reads, feeding on the Bread of God. Then he strikes that saying of James about the law of the Lord being a mirror, so he begins the day with reading a little

from the Epistle to the Ephesians, and then he looks into the mirror, and he says, 'Old man, I am going to fight you to-day.' . . . These men are old warriors. I am glad to say that owing to the power of the Word of God they are at peace with their enemies and at war with their vices."

"The last dish."

In a Chinese hospital a village Christian woman was asked, "Do you read your Bible much?" for she possessed a well-worn copy. "I read it constantly," she answered, "every day. I never wish for the *last dish* when I am reading it." The word she used was the name of the dish which announces the end of a Chinese feast. Reading the New Testament was to her such a feast that she never wished it to come to an end.

Treasure Trove.

On the west coast of France a man showed our colporteur his Bible, whose pages were stained throughout with salt water. He confessed that during a great storm he had gone down to the beach to plunder wreckage washed ashore. Finding a parcel carefully wrapped up, he hoped for something valuable, but was disappointed to discover a book: still he thought that a book on which so much care had been bestowed would repay reading. His wife read it also, and this strangely acquired Bible had taken possession of their hearts.

On a Rubbish Heap.

A young man in Argentina, who possessed a Bible that his father had given him, became engaged to

a Roman Catholic girl. Her confessor informed her that before she could marry, the bridegroom's Bible must be burnt. She told her *fiancé* this ultimatum, so the young man very reluctantly took his Bible, and, as he had not courage to burn it, left it on a rubbish-heap. A woman passing the rubbish-heap saw a book which looked new, took it home with her, examined it, and, as she said, "from that memorable day all of us have read it, and the reading has resulted in the conversion of several of our family." The woman showed the Bible Society's colporteur the very copy, bearing the name of its original owner, who was living in the same town. She was thankful that she had been led to pass by that rubbish-heap and to secure such a treasure.

Bought Seven Years Before.

A Burmese colporteur was selling books near Kandawglay, when a man named Armugam came and said that he had read and re-read the Gospels which he had bought from the same colporteur seven years before, and that he now desired to become a Christian. As he expressed the wish to join a mission which had work near his native place, he was introduced to the S.P.G. mission at Rangoon, where he has been baptized.

A Chinese Testament.

The Rev. W. H. Sears, of Pingtu, Shantung, writes: "One applicant for baptism told me that more than fifteen years ago a New Testament had found its way into his home, and while he did not read as much as he ought, it caused him to give up heathenism and to

seek Christ as his Saviour. None of us can ever know what good the tens of thousands of copies of God's Word are doing in the unopened homes of China."

Through reading the Bible.

The number of those in Brazil who have been led to accept Christ as their Saviour as the direct result of reading the Bible is remarkable. At a recent meeting in Petropolis a fine-looking old farmer from the interior stood up to tell of his conversion. He had found a Bible in his brother's house, and asked for the loan of it. He took it home and became deeply concerned with its contents. For two years he read it, without the slightest help from any one. Gradually he was led to accept the truth he found in its pages, and to-day he is exerting a religious influence in his neighbourhood, and bringing up a Christian family.

"It works by itself."

A Brazilian layman, now engaged in Christian work, writes: "I began to read a Bible which had been given to me by a friend, and became convinced that the truth was written there. I had no explanation, nor did I know where to find any one who could help me. As I read, I felt a great desire to speak about the truth to my neighbours; but when I spoke, they opposed and abused me. Yet the more they abused me the more I wanted to talk to them. At last I heard of a Presbyterian church, and went to visit the place where it was. This proved a great blessing to me, and I also arranged for some one to come and preach the Gospel to my neighbours. The

A ROAD THROUGH THE FOREST IN TASMANIA.

result is that now we have a small church and many have been baptized. . . . I know the Bible is the Word of God, because it works by itself, and God gives understanding to those who ask Him with all their heart."

A Settler in Tasmania.

In Tasmania the Society's colporteur went to one settler and said to him, "Do you read your Bible?" The man replied, "You are a queer one to ask a question like that!" The colporteur said, "Do not take offence at what I am asking." The man admitted frankly that he did not read the Bible as he ought to do. "Well, now," said the colporteur, "I want you to do something for me. I want you to promise me that you will read one verse every night —only one verse. I am not asking much; and I want you to say one short prayer when you read it. I want you to pray 'Lord, teach me.' Now that is not much, is it?" So the man agreed, and promised to do so. Some time afterwards he met our Bible-seller again, and said, "You are a cunning one, you are! Mind you, I have done it; but I do not say that I have not read *more* than one verse. Do you know, I am beginning to see things as my old mother saw them? She was not so far wrong after all."

"The Book had gotten inside him."

From Portuguese West Africa, the Rev. Herbert C. Withey, of the American Methodist Episcopal mission at Angola, sends us the following incident. In November, 1911, a well-to-do, intelligent negro made a journey of twenty-eight miles to the mission station at Quiongua. He is a sergeant in the native

militia, organized by the Portuguese Government. Some time earlier he had purchased copies of the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Luke, and St. John in Mbundu, published by our Society. These he had been diligently studying, until now, as one Christian woman expressed it, " the Book had gotten inside him." So he came seeking for light, to learn more about the Way, and to enquire concerning certain matters which troubled his conscience. He begged particularly to be taught " how to pray, as he only knew how to read." This black sergeant is not far from the Kingdom, and his case, says Mr. Withey, is typical of many others.

"I have it in my heart."

One of our colporteurs in Spain reports that in Valver de Vaso he renewed acquaintance with a man who had bought a Bible from him three years previously. This man related how the Lord was opening his mind, day by day, to understand the Scriptures. " I was an infidel, but through reading the Bible I have learned to love Jesus. If only I had had the opportunity of buying it when I was younger, I would have learned it all off by heart ere now. But the Lord knows why He did not put it into my hand when I was young. Perhaps at that age I would have been content to have it in my mind only, whereas at sixty years of age I have it in my heart."

"The Testament serves as our Mass."

At Nantes a Frenchman who had purchased a New Testament four years ago told Colporteur le Dréau: "I bought the book without knowing

why—for I had never heard of it. I began to read it, little thinking that it would win me altogether (*m'aurait gagné tout entier*), as it has done now. My wife and children also read it with pleasure. On Sundays it passes from hand to hand. The church is situated five miles away from us, which is rather far, especially when the weather is bad. So very often the reading of the Testament serves as our mass."

Nourished in the Wilderness.

A missionary sends the following incident from his own experience in Ceylon :—

"In the course of a recent journey beyond the limits of my station, I found three Tamil Protestants living in a village populated mainly by Moors, with a sprinkling of Roman Catholics. One was an Anglican, the other two—man and wife—were Methodists ; the two men were there in Government employment. The village lies beyond the reach of any of our catechists, and there is no Protestant service which they can attend. Yet they keep the fire burning in that lonely place. They meet on Sunday for prayer and the study of God's Word, and the senior of the two men—a fine type of Tamil Christian—was anxious to obtain tracts and Gospels to use among his neighbours, to whom he preaches Christ. Thus mission work is being done there, without pay and with no Society to support it. I held service for them in the house, and when I came to the reading of the lesson I took up the big Tamil Bible from the table. It almost fell to pieces in my hands. I turned its pages : they were worn and marked and scored until parts were almost illegible. I had touched the secret of the life that flourished there in the desert, of the zeal that burned and was not consumed. Scattered about Ceylon there must be many solitary Christians like these, who, with but rare opportunities for Church worship and fellowship, find in the vernacular Scriptures a means of grace sufficient to keep them stedfast and separate and faithful to their Lord."

The New Testament in Argentina.

In the north of Argentina Mr. Will Payne tells us that he met with a farmer who had emigrated from Switzerland twenty years before. This farmer gave a striking testimony to the power of the Scriptures: "About fifteen years ago I bought a Bible from a man who passed my farm on horseback. For years I had never thought of God; but the reading of that Bible was the means of the conversion of my wife and myself. We have never had a visit from a missionary." Indeed, the nearest evangelical congregation was about 150 miles distant.

Mr. Payne writes: "In the province of Rioja there are some who now believe in Christ as their Saviour, whose first knowledge of Him was gained through the printed page. My heart was encouraged when I saw a poor old crippled woman in the mountains of Rioja draw out her Testament from under a bundle of rags that served as a pillow, while she told me how her husband, who had never met a missionary, had died rejoicing in the Saviour whom he had found through reading that book. She herself finds her consolation in the words which she reads in it from day to day."

"His Good Companion."

In Portugal, at a place named Tornos, Colporteur Arduino came across an old clog-maker, over sixty years of age. For twenty-five years this man had been unable to walk without crutches, and with these he could scarcely hobble from his bed to the chair, where he sat making clogs. The colporteur found him to be a true believer in Jesus Christ. Long years before, one of his relations bought him a Bible

Photo kindly lent *by Mr. A. G. Fraser.*

THE TAMING OF A SHREW IN CEYLON.

in Lisbon, and he has read the book many times from beginning to end, until he knows much of it by heart. The Bible still has its original cover, which is all stitched to keep it from falling to pieces. The whole parish knows about the clog-maker's book, which he calls his "good companion." In that place the colporteur found two young men who knew how to read and bought a Bible and a New Testament. They took the books at once to the old clog-maker, who, after carefully examining them, pronounced them to be the same as his own "good companion."

"Healing for the Wound."

A colporteur in Ceylon had sold Bibles to two Tamil coolies, and on his next visit enquired what they thought of the book after reading it. They replied, "The words of the book are dressing for the sore and healing for the wound"; and when asked further what they meant by this, they said they understood that as a sore could be dressed and treated by a doctor, so there was an unseen Physician who could cleanse from their sins and heal such sinners as themselves.

A Palm-climber's Testimony.

Another colporteur in Ceylon writes: "One man, whose profession is that of a palm-climber, purchased last year a book, and he told me when I next met him that the book was 'like the everlasting water of life' to him, and had brought peace and rest to his house and mind. He had made up his mind to send his sons to the mission school to learn the same religion that the book teaches.

"I succeeded in selling some Gospels to two young

men who bought them with a willing heart. Their parents, however, most violently rejected the books, and tried to cast them away; yet the young men would not yield, but insisted on having their books, 'for,' said they, 'the books are sweet and powerful, and through them the minds of many men in Jaffna have been changed, bringing peace and prosperity to their houses.'"

The Christian Initiation.

From Burma the Rev. Clement H. Chapman, of the W.M.M.S., sends the following experience:—

"For four hundred miles we had threaded our way up the winding river which traverses the Upper Chindwin valley, now in the baking heat and glare of the sun, now in the cool brilliance of moonlight. This was our first tour through new country to be opened for the entry of the Gospel. We had preached in the villages on the river-banks, and sold several hundred copies of the Scriptures to people who had never heard of them before. Early one morning we were told that a Chin wished to speak to us. Learning that a Christian missionary was in the neighbourhood, he had travelled eight miles hither with a single request—that he might be baptized. Eighteen months before, he had bought a Bible in Burmese, thinking that this 'religion book' possibly contained something more satisfying than the *Nat* spirits of his tribal superstition or the Buddhism of the village where he lived. He had taken the book home and slowly read and re-read the whole of it from Genesis to Revelation. His wife and younger brother had joined in this study; for, as they could neither read nor understand Burmese, he translated to them what he read. Almost from the first the Word won its way into their hearts. Here was a God who dealt with the very springs of a man's being—who blotted out a man's sin and opened out for him a new and living way. But the book said not only 'Repent ye,' but 'Be baptized.' This man had known the initiatory rites which marked the attainment of manhood among his own people.

Often they required that the youthful candidate should capture a human head in some raid upon an adjoining village. But where was he to hear more of Christian baptism? There were no Christians near to instruct him. He was employed as a Government forest-guard; so, applying for leave, he had travelled a hundred and fifty miles down the river to Government headquarters, only to be told that no missionary lived there. Keenly disappointed, he returned to his village to practise the Christian life, even though he could not as yet call himself an initiated disciple.

"At last his chance had come. 'Please to give me this baptism,' he said, 'then shall I return to my people and say, "Truly now I am a Christian disciple."' We talked long together, and our talk was of the Book. We were amazed at the man's knowledge of it. Surely we were the learners, for the old Book seemed very new when viewed through the eyes of this eager-souled reader. Sometimes we have had to wait long before administering baptism to an enthusiastic candidate, but there was no such need here. That evening the man returned to his village accompanied by our native preacher, and in his mat house the tiny oil flame flickered far on into the night as these two sat asking and answering questions.

"Next day we ourselves journeyed to the village, where we heard of the high estimation in which this man of despised Chin race was held by his Burmese neighbours, and how already, not without success, he was trying to win them to the faith he had embraced. The people, hearing that a religious ceremony was to be performed, gathered round us expectantly.

"We suggested that Christian names taken from the Bible should be given to the two brothers, in addition to their Chin nomenclature. The elder brother requested that he might be called 'Abraham'—for did not he come out from among his own people and turn away from the cities of evil? The younger brother felt there was an *embarras des richesses.* 'In the Book there are *many* names!' said he. Finally, he fixed on the name of the little red *Luka* Gospel at that moment peeping out from his waist-cloth. At their own door, surrounded by curious onlookers, we baptized the two brothers.

"The man's wife was away in the hills, but she too will seek baptism on her return—as also will a Shan neighbour who has

frequently gone to the house for the reading of the 'Jesus Christ Book.' At the foot of the Chin hills these brothers, Abraham Nyi Han and Luke Shwe Ze Kan, are bearing very real witness to the vitality of the Bible and its power to make men wise unto salvation."

In Korea.

A Korean colporteur thus testifies of his life before conversion: "There was hardly a sin known to man which I had not indulged in. But when a friend who had bought a Gospel of St. Matthew lent me the book, I read it until the tears prevented me. Not a soul came to help me; but as the Son of God suffering for my sin appeared before me, my heart was broken and I was compelled to give myself to Him."

As a missionary stood preaching in a big Korean market he said, pointing to one man in the crowd, "Elder brother, Jesus can save such as you." After the crowd dispersed this man came up to the preacher and said: "Western gentleman, several months ago I bought a book called the Gospel by St. John here, in this market, from a Korean who was preaching. I have read that book over and over, and to-day I came here to see if the man were here again, to tell him that his book had made me believe in Jesus."

It is a happy sight to see Korean Christians making their way to church on Sunday, each with a bundle of books wrapped in a cloth and tucked under the arm. It has become part of his worship for the Korean to take his Testament with him to church, and indeed wherever else he may go. Many of these New Testaments whose owners are devoted Christians are well-worn, with thumb-

marks and pen-marks so numerous that a stranger finds it difficult to read the text clearly; yet the owners treasure these precious pages. Their books are like "old wells whose soft stone lips are fast wearing away, but whose waters are as sweet and pure as ever."

One aged Korean whom the Bible Society's sub-agent visited had taken two copies of two of the Gospels, and had pasted them, page by page, all round the walls of his room. These Gospels had been used of God to bring about his salvation, although he had never seen either a missionary or a preacher. He had pasted them up in order that he might have them ever before his eyes, and also point out to friends and visitors the holy words of his Saviour.

Among the Eskimos.

The Rev. E. W. T. Greenshield, of the C.M.S. mission to the Eskimos, returned in the summer of 1911 to his station on Blacklead Island, Hudson Bay, after a year's absence, and found his church, hospital, stores, and house all in perfect order. They had been under the care of the senior Eskimo teacher, Peter Tooloojakjuak, who, during the missionary's absence, faithfully carried on the work, assisted by another Eskimo, Luke Kidlapik. Mr. Greenshield writes of a recent journey which Luke made into the region south of Blacklead Island, when he came upon a settlement of Eskimos who had never before been visited by any Christian teacher. But he found these people ready and anxious to learn. Nearly all of them were able to read, and had gained some knowledge of Chris-

tianity, chiefly by means of copies of the Eskimo Gospels, published by the Bible Society, which they had obtained. Some of these copies were so dilapidated as to be literally dropping to pieces, and the small supply of Gospels which Luke had taken with him on his sledge proved totally inadequate to satisfy the folk who pleaded for more books.

"Simply by its own force."

Testimonies such as these, gathered from many lands, form a commentary on the words of the Bishop of Oxford, when he was preaching for the Bible Society last autumn in his University pulpit :—

"We can hardly imagine how much even a single Gospel can do to remove misconception, to bring home the attraction of Christ to minds of all kinds in all parts of the world ; and if we read the record of Bible diffusion, we shall find the most touching and penetrating stories of this power of the Bible simply by its own force to penetrate the conscience and bring light to the heart."

The Metropolitan of India, Bishop Coplestone, not long ago confessed at Calcutta that he had become a warm advocate for distributing the Word of God, even by itself. Before he went to India, he did not believe in having the Bible sent out without a living witness to interpret it. His experience has led him altogether to change his mind, and he is a strong supporter of sending the Word of God broadcast among the people of India.

The Holy Book called "Bible."

In Mysore an evangelist was preaching at a temple festival when the following letter was placed in his

hands, written in English from a village miles away from any mission station:—

"To the Messengers of the Gospel of Lord Jesus Christ.

"Gentlemen,—I am an earnest enquirer of Christianity, and humbly beg of you to let me have a copy of the Holy Book called 'Bible.' God bless you and me. I want complete Bible, I mean the Old and New Testament together. Gentlemen, pray for me that the merciful Father may open my eyes to see the truth in it and that I and my village may become the followers of the religion that is mentioned in the 'Bible.' I am prepared to pay half the value. We have a friend in my village to explain us the Bible. I want a Kanarese copy."

From an Italian immigrant who had not long landed in Canada the secretary of our Nova Scotia Auxiliary received in February, 1912, this quaintly worded letter, written in Italian: "Worthy Sir, will you do me the favour to send me your list or catalogue, that would have the intention of giving some little hope of eternal life."

The Missionary Book.

Examples like these, and they are but a few among many, bear witness to the missionary energy of Holy Scripture. There is one campaigner for Christ that never grows weary, and never feels the strain of travel, and lives through arctic cold and torrid sunshine, and laughs at plague and disease, and penetrates where the bravest missionary may not enter. Among the teeming millions of the unevangelized world this silent campaigner is the one tireless ubiquitous evangelist, that never grows old and never needs a furlough. Who can measure the missionary value of the popular edition of the Chinese New Testament, which costs the Bible Society five-

pence to print and produce, and is sold throughout the length and breadth of China for a penny?

The Test of Inspiration.

Finally, such testimony speaks with overwhelming force as evidence to the Divine quality and content of the Book of God. The Christian apologist concerned to defend the Bible against those at home who deny its inspiration can appeal to the missionaries who are engaged in putting that inspiration to the most practical of tests. Their experience enables them to form an up-to-date opinion in regard to the spiritual virtue and value of Holy Scripture. And from their witness we gather irrefutable proof that the Bible is inspired—because it continues to inspire people of all races who pass under its influence. Any man who makes the experiment humbly and seriously for himself will be certified that the Bible comes from God, because it leads him to God.

DROSS TRANSMUTED

"Money, thou bane of blisse and source of wo,
Whence com'st thou, that thou art so fresh and fine?
I know thy parentage is base and low:
Man found thee poore and dirtie in a mine."

GEORGE HERBERT.

The Chinese character which stands for money is the sign for metal, with two spears by the side of it. That is money—precious metal, for the sake of which men fight and pierce themselves through with many sorrows. Down the long generations of human history we trace the worship of the golden image—a cult which can inspire the darkest cruelties and engender the most fantastic superstitions. In the Middle Ages, for example, one favourite superstition was alchemy. And alchemy, in the strict sense of the term, meant the secret art of transmuting base metals into nobler ones, especially into gold. It is true, indeed, that the alchemist, with his crucibles and retorts, became unawares the pioneer of experimental chemistry. Some distinguished modern physicists even maintain that the recent production of helium from radium is a genuine instance of the transmutation of one element into another. And so alchemy may have been not so chimerical a pursuit after all.

Spiritual Alchemy.

But, as a matter of fact, the alchemist was often quite as much a mystic as a magician or man of science. The *magnum opus* which he gave up his life to achieve had transcendent meanings. And the philosopher's stone, which he sought after so eagerly, might be understood in a spiritual sense. In this way we come to see how Raymond Lull, one of the noblest of medieval missionaries, could win fame also as a profound and persevering alchemist. Paracelsus, another famous adept, denounced sordid gold-seekers: "Away with these false disciples who hold that this divine science, which they dishonour and prostitute, has no other end than the making of gold. True alchemy has but one aim and object, to extract the quintessence of things, and to prepare arcana, tinctures, and elixurs which may restore to man the health and soundness he has lost."

From this point of view the Bible Society may be considered as a great institute for the practice of spiritual alchemy. For it collects and receives money from many sources, and it transmutes its revenue into something which is far more golden than gold. It has "but one aim and object"—to publish abroad that Gospel which can indeed "restore to man the health and soundness he has lost."

Cheap Editions.

The Bible Society does not trade to make profit. Its books are printed and bound under conditions which will bear the test of full public scrutiny. But it habitually and deliberately sells its popular editions at a loss, and to defray that loss it relies

on subscriptions and gifts from those who love the Bible. The Society was founded in response to the appealing needs of the poor, and it remains faithful to its original mission. Universal experience proves that to charge a nominal sum for the Scriptures is a far more effective method of circulation than to give them away broadcast. But the prices of the Bible Society's cheap editions are regulated in each country so that God's Book may be brought within reach of the humblest class of readers. Thus, to give an example of this policy from only one mission field, a Bible in Chinese, which costs over two shillings to produce, is sold for sixpence.

Free Gifts.

Moreover the Society's servants and colporteurs have instructions, whenever they find any destitute person who can read and really desires a copy, to present the Book to him as a free gift. And in all cases of special necessity or opportunity—for the sick in hospitals, for criminals in prison, for children in orphanages, and especially for the inhabitants of provinces smitten by famine or pestilence or persecution—the Society relaxes its normal rule and gives the Scriptures, freely and generously, to those who so sorely need their consolation.

A few examples will illustrate the Bible Society's gifts last year. About 10,000 New Testaments in sixteen different languages were distributed, through our friend Miss Agnes Weston, among the crews of the foreign warships attending the Coronation Naval Review at Spithead. To the "Gideons"—the Christian Commercial Travellers' Association of

Canada—10,000 Bibles were granted, to be placed in Canadian hotels for the use of guests. In Russian prisons copies of the Scriptures provided by our Society were given away last year to about 10,000 prisoners; while Mr. Adam Podin has distributed over 13,000 free copies among convicts in Siberia. During the fighting in China 25,000 copies of the Gospels were given away among soldiers in the Imperialist and Revolutionary armies. Gospels were similarly distributed among Italian troops embarking for Tripoli, among the inmates of Chinese hospitals and Korean prisons, to lepers in Ceylon, to convicts in French Guiana, and among Indian children in connection with the Coronation Durbar at Delhi. Over 8,000 copies of the Scriptures in English were accepted last year as gifts from the Society by undergraduates and graduates of Indian Universities.

For many years it has been the Bible Society's regular custom to present a Bible to each boy or girl emigrant sent out to Canada from Dr. Barnardo's Homes and all kindred institutions. Recently these presentation Bibles have been improved in form, and the following letter was received in February, 1912, from Mr. H. F. Elmslie, of Dr. Barnardo's Homes: "We thoroughly appreciate your kindness in sending to us the 250 beautiful Bibles in place of the ones you have supplied us with hitherto. There is a wonderful improvement in these new books you have so generously given us, and I am very sure the emigrants will take far greater care of them on account of their beautiful appearance."

Strange Currency.

Our Bible-sellers in many lands meet folk who from one cause or another are actually penniless. In

A COFFEE GROVE IN BRAZIL.

such cases the colporteur may use his discretion, and give a book in exchange for some equivalent of money. These incidents often possess peculiar interest, not only because they are so curious and so pathetic, but because they bear witness to an eager spiritual hunger for the Bible.

In Spain, Colporteur Saeta describes a lonely and picturesque spot in the Sierra Morena, where he met a company of shepherds, and read them the parable of the Good Shepherd. They wanted to buy the book; and, having no money, gave a rabbit which they had just caught in exchange for a New Testament and a Gospel. To a blacksmith who had no money the colporteur sold a Testament in return for having his donkey shod. In a Rumanian village Colporteur Maliszewsky bartered a Bible for a hen; it proved an excellent fowl, so he added a New Testament. On a Rumanian feast-day, Colporteur Kraft visited a village church, where he quickly sold all the books he carried: one old man, in default of money, paid ten eggs and a lump of bacon for a Bible.

In Croatia and Slavonia many of the people are sunk in poverty, and Colporteur Herrmann writes that he often visits homes where there are not 3 *kreuzer* (= $\frac{3}{5}$d.) to buy a single Gospel. In cases of this kind eggs seem to be the chief medium of exchange, and we can quite sympathize with Herrmann when he writes that carrying about eggs is sometimes inconvenient. Last autumn, among the vineyards on the slopes of the lower Alps, the Italian peasants offered to exchange grapes for the Scriptures. "Had I had a cart with me," says our colporteur, "I could easily have filled it with grapes"

The Ring and the Book.

In Morocco an Arab woman, at Fez, wanted to carry home a copy of a Gospel, but as she had no money with her at the time she left her silver ring as surety. When she returned to pay for the book, she declined to take her ring back, explaining that the Gospel had proved of such great value to her that it was worth far more than the ring. South of Tangier, a village teacher purchased St. Matthew's Gospel and the Epistle to the Romans from our sub-agent, Mr. R. G. Steven, paying for them with "delicious butter and milk." On his way to Fez Mr. Steven rode into a place where water was so very scarce that he had difficulty in purchasing any; so he arranged to give a Gospel to an Arab in exchange for a pail of water for his horse. This Arab spent a long time listening while Mr. Steven read and explained parts of the little volume; he wondered greatly at its contents, and on taking farewell he said, "As for this book, even though I were offered five dollars for it, I would not give it up."

In Korea.

In Korea many a copy of the Scriptures has been bartered for an egg, a night's lodging, a bowl of *pap* (cooked rice), a dish of *kimpje* (pickle to flavour the rice), a small half-gourd full of beans, a little millet or unhulled barley, a pair of straw shoes, or a needful stitch in the colporteur's coat, or perhaps the washing and ironing of his cotton socks. Sometimes even a bowl of drinking-water is rewarded by the gift of a Gospel. One colporteur last year overcame the "no money" excuse by taking

payment in potatoes: these he traded for rice in a market ten miles off, and the rice provided him with food for the next few days.

In Belgian Congo the circulation of money has found little place thus far among the Bakuba tribesmen. But they bought copies of the Inkongo New Testament by barter, paying for them sometimes with a quantity of cassava-root, or maize, or vegetables, sometimes by a week's labour in tilling land for the mission.

During the course of a colportage journey in Brazil about twenty-six towns and villages were visited, and "over a thousand copies of the Scriptures were sold—apart from Gospels given to the very poor, and some copies bartered for provisions, such as eggs, fowls, fruit, coffee, cabbages, bread, and brick-sugar."

From Many Givers.

Among the multitude of gifts which flowed into the Society's treasury last year, we may specially record a few illustrations of widespread sympathy and interest:—£25, an annual subscription, from H.M. the German Emperor; *Rs.* 250 from the Viceroy of India; £10 16s. from Harrow School; £8 1s. 7d. from the Royal Naval College, Osborne; £712, a jubilee thanksgiving collection, from Mornington Road Wesleyan Church, Southport; £10 from the first Bible meeting ever held in Tangier; 50 *marks* from a gathering of Lithuanian Baptists in East Prussia; £19 15s. 1d. from the Society's Coptic Auxiliary at Cairo; £8 from the Chinese Presbyterian congregation at Dunedin, N.Z.

The Society's Indian Auxiliaries raised last year in

local contributions £3,149. Among many generous gifts were not a few which involved very real self-sacrifice. A little mission church in Assam, consisting of seventeen members, chiefly coolies working on tea estates, gave *Rs.* 16-11 as their thank-offering; while *Rs.* 27 came from the lepers of the Bhagalpur asylum. From the American Methodist Episcopal orphanage at Sironcha we hear that "Fifty-six boys left one week's meat for the sake of the Bible Society. Some little boys earned one *rupee* by picking cotton fallen from trees."

From Tahiti the Rev. L. de Pomaret forwards, on behalf of the *Conseil supérieur des églises indigènes de Tahiti*, a gift of 250 *fr.*, as "a modest expression of the gratitude of the native churches in Tahiti for your grand and noble Society, and of their desire to co-operate with it, however feebly, in the blessed work which is entrusted to it in the world."

The following touching letter, which we print *verbatim et literatim*, was received from one of the English midland counties:—

"We drus our olde Age Pencon for the furste on Friday me and my Whife we inclose a Postal order for the 10s. for the Briteach and Foreyn Bible Socearty—yours a lover of the Bible."

Demands which outrun Resources.

These are only a few specimens of the generous gifts which make the world-wide distribution of the Scriptures possible. But all taken together, they fail to meet the immense and growing claims which press upon the Bible House more imperiously than ever. During this last year our Society spent £16,632 more than it received.

A careful comparison has been made between the Society's income, expenditure, and circulation during the last twenty years. If we compare the average figures for the ten years 1891–1901, and for the ten years 1901–11, we find that the Society's expenditure has risen more than 9 per cent., its income has risen only 3·5 per cent., while its circulation has increased 40 per cent. This last increase is chiefly due to the enormous demand for cheap editions of Gospels and Testaments, which are sent out to the foreign mission field and sold, as a rule, at almost nominal prices.

The very success of Christian missions is beginning to cripple the Bible Society. The world lies open to the Gospel as it never did before. The power of the printed page increases every year. The schoolmaster is abroad in every civilized nation. Elementary education is universal in Japan, and is likely to become so in India and in China. In all countries simple folk are more and more accessible to the moral and spiritual appeal of the Scriptures. Shall our Society be actually compelled at this juncture to limit its output, because so many Christians grudge to let their earthly treasures be transmuted into what is more golden than gold?

* * * * *

One of the original founders of the Bible Society, Dr. Marsh, when he became a very old man, blind, and quite unable to move about, was wheeled on to the platform at a Bible meeting and made the following brief but pregnant speech:—

"I love the British and Foreign Bible Society. I love it because it is British: I am a Briton, and

I like everything British. I love it because it is foreign, because I have a warm heart for all parts of the world, and when I have a good thing I don't want to keep it for myself, but to let everybody have some of it. I love it because it belongs to and is connected with the Bible, because under God I owe everything in the world to the Bible. Last of all, I love it because it is a Society, and it binds us all together round this glorious Book."

APPENDIX

NOTICE RESPECTING REMITTANCES.

Subscriptions and donations are received at the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C. ; also at the Society's Bankers, WILLIAMS DEACON'S Bank, Limited, 20, Birchin Lane, E.C. ;—advice being sent to the Secretaries at the Bible House. Cheques, Bankers' Drafts, and Post Office Orders *(on the General Post Office)* should be made payable to *The British and Foreign Bible Society*, and addressed to the Secretaries.

Letters containing Orders for Books are requested to be addressed, prepaid, to the British and Foreign Bible Society, 146, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C. The Society's Depôt is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., the Offices from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. On Saturdays the Depôt closes at 1 p.m., and the Offices at 2 p.m. The Bible House is closed on the usual public holidays.

FORM OF A BEQUEST TO THE SOCIETY.

I bequeath the sum of *Pounds sterling free of Legacy Duty to* "THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY," *instituted in London in the year 1804, to be paid for the purposes of the said Society to the Treasurer for the time being thereof, whose Receipt shall be a good discharge for the same.*

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* *Deceased since March 31, 1912.*

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* *Not on the Committee last year.*

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Rev. T. A. Wolfendale, M.A.,
41, *Barrfield Road, Pendleton, Manchester.*

Rev. A. H. Gaskell, M.A., B.D.,
19, *Staverton Road, Oxford.*

Rev. J. Addison Ingle, M.A.,
Walden, Mount Gold Road, Plymouth.

Rev. John A. Cooper,
Carrick-a-Rede, Central Avenue, West Bridgford, Notts.

Rev. A. J. Marrs,
69, *St. George's Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle-on-Tyne.*

Rev. J. O. Haughton, B.A.,
Picton Cottage, Waterloo, Liverpool.

Rev. H. K. Marsden, M.A.,
4, *Ashwood Terrace, Headingley, Leeds.*

Rev. D. E. Walters, M.A., B.D.,
15, *Heathfield, Swansea.*

Rev. H. J. Cossar, M.A.,
St. Luke's Lodge, Alpha Road, Cambridge.

Rev. George Daunt, B.A.,
83B, *Clevedon Road, Weston-super-Mare.*

Rev. W. F. Hodge, M.A.,
27, *Connaught Avenue, East Sheen, Surrey.*

Rev. H. Starmer,
12, *Cedar Road, Norwich.*

Mr. Robert F. Crosland, J.P., F.R.G.S.,
Oldfieldnook, Cleckheaton.

SUMMARY

The British and Foreign Bible Society exists for one single object—to supply every man with the Holy Scriptures in his own mother-tongue. It concerns itself solely with circulating that Book which is the charter of Christ's Church throughout all the world. And in this aim it unites Christians of almost every communion.

The Year 1911-1912.

Twelve months ago we reported a circulation which surpassed all its predecessors, and only just fell short of seven million books. The Society's total issues now to be reported for the past year have amounted altogether to 7,394,523 copies of the Scriptures. This wonderful result was made up of 968,377 Bibles, 1,584,262 New Testaments, and 4,841,884 smaller Portions.

We observe that the issue last year of complete Bibles was 65,000 more, and the issue of New Testaments was 385,000 more, than in the year previous, while the issue of Portions was less by 31,000—the net increase being 419,000 volumes. This increase is chiefly due to sales of the Society's improved edition of the Penny English Testament.

It is worth while to notice that of the year's issues more than a million and a half volumes have been in English or Welsh, mainly for readers in the British Empire. We rejoice that this total is 280,000 volumes in advance of the figures for 1910-11, which again were 137,000 above those for the previous year.

The issues from the Bible House in London increased last year by 433,000 volumes. Two-thirds of the Society's total issues, however, are printed abroad, for the most part in the countries where they are read.

The total issues by the Society since its foundation have exceeded 236,500,000 copies of the Scriptures, complete or in parts. Of these more than 86,000,000 have been in English.

MORE GOLDEN THAN GOLD

The Work at Home.

Of last year's total issues, 1,533,988 volumes were in English, Welsh, Gaelic and Irish, and circulated mainly in the British Empire. This number is 276,531 in advance of the figures for 1910-11. Of the English Penny Testament, in its new and improved edition, 347,323 were issued—as compared with 108,820 in the year previous—making a total of 9,509,096 during the last twenty-seven years. The Scriptures issued last year in English included 132,127 copies of the Society's 6d. Bible; 84,293 copies of the 10d. Bible; and 76,215 copies of the 'Ionic' 1s. School Bible. The issues included 22,347 Bibles and 7,476 Testaments in the English Revised Version—as compared with 1,456,990 Bibles, Testaments, and Portions in the English Authorised Version.

In England and Wales the Society spent nearly £9,000 last year, mainly in direct grants of Scriptures—free or at greatly reduced rates—to the Sunday Schools and Home Missions of nearly every Christian communion, and to all the varied agencies of religious and philanthropic activity.

Nearly all the English and Welsh institutions for befriending the blind obtain the Scriptures which they require from the Bible House, at less than half the cost of their production.

Students at Theological and Missionary Colleges in England and Wales, who need such assistance, receive as gifts over 1,000 Old Testaments in Hebrew or New Testaments in Greek each year. The Society also presents outgoing missionaries with Bibles or Testaments in the vernaculars of the fields in which they labour.

A subsidy of £500 a year is given to the London Biblewomen and Nurses' Mission for the maintenance of over 97 Biblewomen, who, during the year ending December 31, 1911, sold 2,483 copies of the Scriptures among the poor living in the slums of London.

Translation and Revision.

The Society's list of versions now includes the names of FOUR HUNDRED AND FORTY distinct forms of speech. This means the complete Bible in 107 different languages; the New Testament in 105 more languages; and at least one book of Scripture in 228 other languages.

These versions are printed at about fifty different places, and in sixty different sets of characters. Eighty-six new names have been added to the list of versions since the present century began.

The Society's expenditure last year for translating, revising, printing, and binding the Scriptures was £123,881.

In embossed type for the blind the Society has already helped to provide Scriptures in thirty-three different languages.

The Partner of Missions.

The foreign missions of almost every Reformed Church draw supplies of Scriptures from the Bible Society. These are sent out, carriage paid, to the remotest mission stations, on such terms that practically no charge falls on the exchequer of the missions which receive and circulate the books. In every field the missionaries are our most enthusiastic helpers and our most grateful friends, testifying to the indispensable assistance which they thus obtain. There is no prouder title on earth than the title, *Servant of the servants of God;* and as the Bishop of Winchester recently declared, no society better deserves that title than the Bible Society.

From the Bible Society the Church of England obtains almost all the Scriptures required for its foreign missions.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts has procured Scriptures from the Bible Society in seventy-five languages. The Church Missionary Society has used one hundred and eleven different translations which come from the Bible House. Equally important help is rendered to the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, to the Melanesian Mission, and the South American Missionary Society.

Nonconformist Foreign Missions also obtain the bulk of all the Scriptures they use, directly or indirectly, from the Bible Society.

It furnishes the London Missionary Society with the Scriptures in fifty-nine different languages, and Methodist Missions in different countries with ninety-three versions. Presbyterian missions throughout the world use one hundred and thirty-one of its versions. It published the Kongo New Testament for the Baptist Missionary Society, and also supplies many of their stations in China and Jamaica. The China Inland Mission and

other undenominational societies obtain from the Bible Society practically all the editions of the Scriptures which they use.

The enterprises and triumphs of Christian Missions are creating as many new and imperious claims upon this Society—which has never refused to publish a duly authenticated version of the Scriptures in a new tongue. Each new tribe evangelized, each fresh language reduced to writing and grammar, each new convert baptized, means a new claim for help from the resources of the Bible House—help which is most gladly given, on such terms that it creates no charge upon the funds of the Mission which is aided thereby.

In Foreign Lands.

The Society maintains depôts in more than a hundred of the chief cities of the world.

It employs over 1,100 native Christian colporteurs, who were continuously at work throughout the year 1911, supervised by the Society's foreign agents or its missionary friends. These colporteurs sold last year more than 3,300,000 copies.

It supports 600 native Christian Biblewomen, mainly in the East, in connection with forty different missionary organizations.

The Society's total expenditure on colporteurs and Biblewomen during 1911 amounted to £47,521.

Auxiliaries.

At the close of 1911 the Society had over 5,300 Auxiliaries, Branches, and Associations in England and Wales. During 1911 as many as 4,600 meetings were held, and more than 3,300 sermons were preached, on behalf of the Society.

Outside the United Kingdom the Society has over 3,000 Auxiliaries and Branches, mainly in the British Colonies. Many of these carry on Bible distribution vigorously in their own localities, besides sending generous annual contributions to the Bible House in London.

The Centenary Fund.

The Committee have followed out their policy of devoting this Fund for the most part to definite special objects, involving capital expenditure, but also relieving the Society's annual charges. Further sums have been laid out in securing sites,

depôts, or other premises at important centres. Grants have also been voted for new versions and editions of the Scriptures, and for extended colportage. Altogether £176,904 of this Fund has already been spent.

Expenditure.

The total payments from the General Fund for the past year have been £274,603. This is an increase of £25,508 on the total of the previous year.

In producing editions of the Scriptures, the Committee have laid out £123,881; this is £17,895 more than in the previous year—a result of the growing demand from most parts of the world. Our thankfulness and our sense of responsibility are deepened by the conviction that this demand for the Bible will go on growing year by year. The cost of foreign depôts—£44,370—shows an increase of £2,860; the amount spent from the General Fund on colportage—£44,948—has risen by £2,635. Other items of expenditure show an increase amounting to £2,118.

Receipts.

The General Fund receipts for the year have risen to £258,010—a welcome advance of £15,002 on the previous year.

Examining the several items of this total, we find that the Legacies received during the past year, amounting altogether to £53,830, were considerably more than the Legacies received in 1910-11. It is the Committee's rule, however, to use as income from this source in any year the average of the Legacies received during the previous seven years. Acting on this rule, the amount from Legacies to be now carried into income is £44,290, the balance, £9,539, being taken over to the Legacy Equalization Fund.

Donations and Subscriptions and Collections paid into the Bible House at London together amounted to £27,452, and show an increase of £3,692.

The total receipts from sales during the past year have amounted to £104,266, against £93,053 in the previous year. This increase of £11,213 is made up of additional amounts of £6,712 received from home sales, and of £4,501 from foreign sales.

Free Contributions.

Perhaps the most significant item in the Society's income is supplied by the Free Contributions from its Auxiliaries. During the year the Home Auxiliaries have paid in £60,654—an increase of £224.

The Colonial Auxiliaries last year have sent £13,421—an increase of £1,004. Thus the total Free Contributions have amounted to £74,075, against £72,847 in 1910–11, showing a net increase of £1,228.

We may mention that £353 has been raised for the Society in Russia; £380 has come from the Republics of the Andes; £408 from the Yoruba Auxiliary at Lagos; £1,531 from South Africa; £1,762 from New Zealand; and £5,629 from Australia. Canada, after defraying expenses of Bible work in the Dominion, has remitted £4,724. Contributions in India reached a total of £3,032. The Hibernian Bible Society's contribution last year was £2,008.

A Deficit.

Payments and receipts, under sundry Special Funds, raised the Society's Total Receipts last year to £258,509, compared with the Total Expenditure of £275,141. Thus, notwithstanding the welcome increase in receipts, the Cash Account shows a deficiency of £16,632 4s. 4d. on the year's working.

Obituary.

Since the last annual meeting death has called away the following of the Society's Vice-Presidents: the Rev. Principal Fairbairn, of Mansfield College, Oxford, a learned master among theologians; Sir Robert Hart, for so many years the most influential European in China; the Rev. Dr. J. Guinness Rogers, the veteran Free Church leader; Sir Charles Alfred Elliott, the distinguished Indian official; the Rev. Dr. J. Oswald Dykes, Principal Emeritus of Westminster College, Cambridge; and Mr. J. Rice Lewis, of Liverpool.

The sudden death of Dr. A. Rolland Rainy, M.P., removed one who for several years gave valuable service on the Society's Committee.

The Staff.

The Rev. A. Taylor, one of the Secretaries of the Society, has returned from a long and successful tour, lasting more than eight months, during which he visited the Auxiliaries and Agencies in Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, India, Ceylon, and Egypt.

Mr. William Piper Wakelin, the Society's veteran Accountant, has retired after more than fifty-one and a half years' unbroken service at the Bible House. Mr. Alfred Buchanan has been appointed his successor.

Mr. William Bulloch has resigned the post of Warehouse Manager at the Bible House, London; Mr. George Cowan has now been appointed Superintendent of the Publishing Department.

The Rev. T. S. Wynkoop has resigned his position, after over eighteen years' faithful and successful service, as Secretary of the North India Auxiliary at Allahabad.

The Rev. John A. Campbell, formerly a missionary in Persia and Asiatic Turkey, has been appointed Assistant-agent at Constantinople, as coadjutor to the Rev. T. R. Hodgson.

Baron Felix Stackelberg has been appointed Assistant-agent at St. Petersburg.

After over eighteen years' devoted service as District Secretary the Rev. W. Fisher, M.A., has resigned, having accepted the living of Kingham, Oxfordshire. The vacancy thus created has been filled by the appointment of the Rev. W. F. Hodge, M.A., who was from 1905 to 1909 District Secretary for Yorkshire, and now rejoins the Society's Staff.

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS
EXTRACTED FROM THE ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDING

RECEIPTS.

FROM SALES OF SCRIPTURES.			
Sales through trade depôts, Auxiliary and other societies	£38,670 7 10		
Sales in the Society's Foreign agencies ...	65,595 6 0		
		£104,265 13 10	
FREE INCOME.			
Contributions from Auxiliaries, Foreign agencies, &c.	81,682 4 1		
Annual Subscriptions, Donations, Legacies, &c.	72,560 18 5		
		154,243 2 6	
		£258,508 16 4	

AND PAYMENTS OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY,
(GENERAL AND SPECIAL FUNDS),
MARCH 31st, 1912.

PAYMENTS.

For Production of editions of the Scriptures ...	£125,173	5	8
For Distribution of the Scriptures	112,633	1	5
For Administration	20,020	18	3
For Home Organization	17,313	15	4
	£275,141	0	8

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The History of the British and Foreign Bible Society

By WILLIAM CANTON. With Portraits and Illustrations. The second part of the History, 1854–1904, is in three vols. 10*s.* each net. The first two vols., 1804–1854, may also be had. 10*s.* each net. The complete set of five volumes, £2 2*s.* net. Published by Mr. John Murray, Albemarle Street, W. To be had of all Booksellers, or from the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.

Letters of George Borrow to the British and Foreign Bible Society

Published by direction of the Committee. Edited by T. H. DARLOW. Price 7*s.* 6*d.* net. Hodder & Stoughton, London, New York, and Toronto.

Historical Catalogue of the Printed Editions of Holy Scripture in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society

Compiled by T. H. DARLOW, M.A., and H. F. MOULE, M.A. In two vols., 8vo., large paper, bound in dark blue buckram, top edges gilt. Vol. I., English, published in 1903. Vol. II., Other Languages (1,750 pp., bound in three parts), now ready. Only 500 sets printed, of which 450, numbered and signed, were for sale in England and America. The subscription price of the last 200 sets has been raised to £3 3*s. net* for the two volumes (not sold separately). To be obtained at the Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.

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